



Philippians

Living a Happy and Holy Life

Week 7

The Letter's Conclusion

4:2-23

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The Transformation of our Bodies (3:21-4:1)

- ❖ Here we are again – THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY
 - Do you see why it is so odd that most people reciting the creed don't understand that it is their own body?
 - What are some of the larger implications of ignoring this key doctrine?
- ❖ Verse 4:1 – “Therefore . . .”
 - What meaning is conveyed to you by the “therefore?”
 - A crown was often awarded to winners of athletic competitions.
 - Do you hear Paul's fondness for the Philippians?

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Euodia and Syntyche (4:2-3)

- ❖ These two women are probably the leaders of two house churches who are meeting in their homes. Evidently, Paul has learned of some disputes among them.
 - Notice that Paul urges them to be of the “same mind,” which is an identical phrase to 2:2.
 - These two women, along with Clement and others, have struggled in the work of the gospel. Still more evidence of the prominent role of women in the early church.
- ❖ Who is the unnamed “loyal companion?”
 - Paul is probably referring to Epaphroditus, whom he is again lifting up before the Philippians.
- ❖ Rome kept civic registers in their cities. The “book of life” is a familiar image from the OT and is the civic register’s counterpart in the kingdom of God, of which the believers are citizens.

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Rejoice!! (4:4-7)

- ❖ A brief passage, but one to be savored and enjoyed.
- ❖ The Greek word translated “gentleness” denotes generosity toward as others.
- ❖ Regardless of what Paul means by the “Lord is near,” (space or time or both) God’s people should rejoice and be comforted.
- ❖ Verse 6 can be compared to Jesus in Matt. 6:25-34.
 - Our prayers and supplications are to be offered up in thanksgiving, always.
 - The “peace” is not merely the absence of conflict, but is the total well-being that comes from God – to those who are in Christ Jesus.

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“think about these things” (v. 8-9)

- ❖ Christians do not have a monopoly on understanding virtues and the importance of living a virtuous life.
- ❖ Paul’s list of virtues in v. 8 was pretty standard fare in the Greek world.
- ❖ His point is that all that is true, all that is beautiful, all that is commendable . . . it is all from God and should be appreciated and enjoyed on those terms.
 - There is something of God in both the Taj Mahal and a well-turned double-play in baseball!
- ❖ Though v. 8 is not specifically Christian, verse 9 is. Jesus is the embodiment of the virtues and qualities from v. 8.
 - Notice that, again, Paul doesn’t issue a straightforward call to Christlikeness, but calls them to do what Paul has done!

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A personal note of thanks (4:10-20)

- ❖ Why wait until the letter’s end to get to the “thank-you note?”
 - Perhaps Paul has already written to them since getting the gift.
 - Or, Paul understands that the Philippians are his partners in ministry, not his paymaster. Bear in mind that Paul has the gift in mind in the opening of the letter as well.
- ❖ Paul is content, regardless of his circumstances. Thus, he doesn’t “need” the gift. What he is really grateful for is the special bond that he has with the Philippians, as evidenced by the gift.
 - The word translated “content” also means “self-sufficient.” For Paul, this “self-sufficiency” is from God – the one through whom Paul finds the strength.
- ❖ The Philippians have been his partner, providing financial help, since he left them the first time. It is this sacrifice, sent to him but offered to God, that Paul finds so satisfying.

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Closing words (v. 21-23)

- ❖ “Saint” means believers!
 - Despite the word coming to mean “super-Christian, in your New Testament it is simply a synonym for “believer.” In the same way, in the NT perspective, all believers have been “born again/born anew/born a second time,” not just a group of believers who’ve had some sort of special experience.
- ❖ The reference to “members of the emperor’s household” is talking about members of the imperial civil service who have become believers.