

# THE ONE YEAR BIBLE CLUB

WITH TEACHING COMMENTARY BY NICK BOORK

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## September 29 – Philippians 1:1-26

<sup>1</sup> Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: <sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup> I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup> always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, <sup>5</sup> for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; <sup>7</sup> just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.

<sup>9</sup> And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. <sup>12</sup> But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, <sup>13</sup> so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; <sup>14</sup> and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. <sup>15</sup> Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: <sup>16</sup> The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; <sup>17</sup> but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. <sup>18</sup> What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

<sup>19</sup> For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, <sup>20</sup> according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup> But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup> For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. <sup>24</sup> Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. <sup>25</sup> And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, <sup>26</sup> that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

## OKAY, HERE'S MY TEACHING COMMENTARY

### Introduction to the Book of Philippians

On Paul's second missions trip he was divinely led by God to the city of Philippi to preach the gospel and plant the first church in Europe. The supernatural power of God manifested when

Paul cast an evil spirit out of a young woman that was a fortune teller. Paul and Silas were thrown into prison because the men that the woman worked for realized she could no longer tell people fortunes and so the money that people used to pay for this had vanished because the evil spirit that enabled this woman had been cast out! They reported Paul and Silas to the local authorities and they were then beaten and thrown into prison. However, God send a massive earth quake and not only set Paul and Silas free but all the prisoners. The jailer was about to commit suicide but Paul prevented him and led him to faith in Jesus. He baptized this man and his family and led several others to get saved and be baptized an so the church in Philippi was planted. Now he's writing a letter from a Roman prison to encourage the believers to continue strong in their faith. The key theme is the joy of the Lord and rejoicing.

### **Bishops and Deacons**

Paul addresses the church greeting all the Saints, Elders, Deacons. For me this is a very important insight into the structure of churches planted by the apostle Paul. Notice the plurality of the two ministerial groups recognized Elders (Plural) and Deacons (Plural). The reason this is important is because it was a pattern that Paul followed when he established new churches. In the Old Testament, there were two classes of ministers appointed to serve in the temple called Priests and Levites. The duties of the Priests were to teach the people the law and offer up sacrifices to make atonement for the people's sins and worship God. The Levites were given to the Priests to help them do all kinds of tasks like helping the Priests to prepare sacrifices, pack and move the temple while they traveled in the desert with Moses then later clean the temple and serve as door keepers. Priests and Levites were essential to the service of the temple. I believe the Holy Spirit revealed to Paul the necessity of appointing two similar groups to serve the New Testament temple, the local Church.

The Bible specifically calls these two categories of ministers Elders and Deacons in several places found in the New Testament. (Ref; 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1 and 1 Peter 5) This is why these two groups were acknowledged in the greeting of Paul to the Church at Philippi because he recognized them as the spiritual leaders and appointed servants within that local church. I believe every church should have a training and mentorship program to develop the Biblical ministries of Elders and Deacons. What do these ministries do? We'll they kind of overlap in some areas like visiting the sick and even preaching the Word.

Stephen and Philip were both part of the original seven Deacons appointed by the Apostles in Acts 6 but they soon were preaching the word of God. Stephen became the first recorded martyr for Jesus and Philip went on to become a powerful Evangelist! Deacons were entrusted with distributing food and finances to those in need and helping the pastor and elders in whatever needs to be taken care of in the areas of church maintenance and administration. Many times, deacons will oversee receiving offerings, counting money, greeting, security and a host of other practical areas. They need to be men and women of the highest Christian character as they represent Christ and the local Church.

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Elders typically have a grace to teach and preach the word and are more like shepherds that feed and care for people spiritually. Elders are called by God and appointed in the Church by the Holy Spirit: Acts 20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Paul assembled the Elders from the Church at Ephesus and gave them a final charge to fulfill their leadership roles faithfully: Acts 20:17 "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church." Paul ordained Elders in the churches he started. Acts 14:23 "So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed." Like the Priests that served in the Old Testament Temple, the primary duty of Elders is to preach and teach the Word of God, oversee the overall vision and affairs of the church and pray for the sick. (Ref; 2 Timothy 4, 1 Timothy 5:17-18, 1 Peter 5, James 5) Has God called you to be an Elder or Deacon? If he has then pursue it with all your heart, serve the Lord faithfully and He will promote you and cause your ministry to bless many and become fruitful.

## **Prayer for Spiritual Growth**

Paul prays the following five points to be realized in their lives:

- That their love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment.
- That they may approve the things that are excellent.
- That they may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.
- That they would be filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ.
- That God would be glorified and praised.

Paul writes out the prayer that he is praying for them. Why did he do this? Because he wanted to provide a guide for them to enlarge their prayer life! Prayer guides have really helped me learn to pray. I remember when I first got saved, someone put in my hands a book called "Prayers that Avail Much" by Germaine Copland. It was full of Scripturally based prayers that I could personalize and pray for myself and others. I did this until I could pray them without reading them. What a difference it made in my personal prayer life with God. I want to encourage you to personalize this prayer for yourself and others in your approach to prayer. You can be assured that this is the will of God because it is his written word and the Lord will answer you as you begin to pray it in faith for yourself and others.

## **The Gospel Advances through Paul in Prison**

Paul reports that his being arrested and incarcerated had really caused the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ to spread far and wide. All the soldiers, officials, and prisoners knew that Paul was in chains for Christ and his message entered into the very household of Cesar. In a very real way the apostle Paul was the talk of Rome as people high and low in society discussed why he was suffering and what the message of the gospel was all about, it just naturally became a part of the city's conversation and people came to faith in Christ! Paul rejoiced because of this! His imprisonment also had the effect of influencing many others to rise up and begin to preach the gospel boldly. They reasoned that if the apostle Paul was willing to suffer for the cause of Christ then they also would preach the gospel to see people saved even if it meant going to prison.

## **The Philosophy of the Apostle Paul**

Paul declared his personal philosophy in 1:21 saying ***“For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain”*** Paul was absorbed with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God. Ever since the Lord confronted Paul on the road to Damascus when he was on his way to persecute Christians, the entire purpose of his life changed forever! Christ had called him to be his ambassador and gave him the task of preaching the gospel to the entire Gentile world and establishing his church. Every day that Paul woke up was another day to live for Jesus Christ and his purposes. This was a great sacrifice on the part of Paul because we know about all the sufferings that he endured for Christ and he also said in 1 Corinthians's 15 that it required him to die daily to his self. This is the price that all of us must pay to live for Christ.

For many giving up their own plans and ambitions is just too high of a price to pay. Some people live to get rich while others seek fame and glory but Paul lived for Christ and because of this he could look forward to spending eternity in the presence of God with Christ in Heaven. This is why Paul said in the second part of his philosophy ***...to die is gain!*** He knew that if you live for Christ here on earth that when the hour of death came either by natural causes or through martyrdom him he would gain Christ and eternal life! He even shared a great struggle that he was experiencing of having a desire to depart from this world and to be with Christ which he said would be far better but to remain on earth or in the flesh would benefit many people through his teaching in ministry. Paul seemed to discern that he still had some time even though he was locked up in prison.

The book of Acts records that he spent two whole years in his own rented home and continued to teach and preach the Kingdom of God to all the came to see him. Can you just imagine being there with Paul and a bunch of believers listening to him preach! Church history records that Paul was martyred at Rome for his faith in Christ at which time he went directly into the presence of his Savior to rest from all his struggles and persecutions and enjoy the fellowship of God and the Saints forever. However, we're not finished with the book of Philippians. We still have three chapters to go and they are loaded with God's purposes in Christ, Joy and an abundance of spiritual revelation of who we are in Christ!

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## WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

- 1) The apostle Paul planted the church at Philippi on his second missionary journey
- 2) He was writing to the church from prison to encourage them.
- 3) Elders and Deacons are the primary ministries to be established in local churches.
- 4) He writes a prayer for them and we can use it to personalize as a guide as well.
- 5) The philosophy of Paul was to live is Christ and to die is gain.

## PRAYER TO APPLY THE WORD OF GOD TO OUR LIVES



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