

26-0712a - Detailed Summary

26-0712a - *Paul's Letter to the Philippians, Part 1*, Steve Cain

Bible Readers: John Kessler and John Nousek

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Paul's Letter to the Philippians, Part 1

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 1:00): John Kessler

Philippians 1:27-30: Our first scripture reading today is from Philippians chapter 1, verses 27 through 30, read by John K from the NIV translation. The passage emphasizes conducting oneself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, standing firm in the one Spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel without being frightened by opponents. It notes that such steadfastness is a sign to opponents of their destruction but the believers' salvation by God. It further states that it has been granted to believers on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for Him, referencing the same struggle Paul himself faced and continues to face. The reading concludes with "It's the word of God."

2nd Reading (1:06 - 2:20): John Nousek

Philippians 2:1-4: John N then delivers the second scripture reading from Philippians chapter 2, verses 1 through 4, also from the NIV. The text begins with an appeal based on encouragement in Christ, consolation of love, fellowship of the Spirit, and affection and compassion. It urges believers to make the apostle's joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, being united in spirit, and intent on one purpose. It instructs to do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard others as more important than oneself, and to look out not only for one's own interests but also for the interests of others. The reading ends with "Amen."

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 37:10), Preacher: Steve Cain

(2:26 - 4:43) Opening Greetings and Worship Focus

Steve greets the congregation, noting it is good to see everyone gathered to worship God, lift Him up, praise Him, and thank Him for His grace and mercy. Believers are recipients of this grace and mercy, enabling them to stand before God without sin. God sent His Son as the propitiation for sins. Jesus serves as the high priest, representing believers before God, presenting prayers and presenting them without fault or sin. The church exists because Jesus declared He would build His church on the rock of confession that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. God appointed Jesus as priest after the order of Melchizedek. Through this, justification is provided: though people were and continue to be sinners subject to death and separation from God, Jesus paid the debt, justifying believers and making it possible to live righteously.

(4:43 - 7:47) Introduction to Paul's Letter to the Philippians

Steve announces that the message will draw from Paul's letter to the Philippians, to be used both morning and evening. He encourages the use of Bibles or electronic versions. Many listeners, like the original recipients, are first-generation Christians, though Steve himself comes from a multi-generational Christian family. Paul wrote to first-generation Christians in the first century who

responded to the gospel provided through God's mercy. This gospel offers the opportunity to worship God without sin and to anticipate eternal life in heaven. Paul emphasizes knowing what pleases God, making Bible study—especially of the New Testament—inspired by the Holy Spirit essential for understanding God's mind, purpose, righteous living, and proper conduct. Walking in the light ensures ongoing cleansing by Jesus as high priest. Paul wants believers to recognize they are spared hell and granted heaven through God's mercy and the gospel. As first-generation Christians ourselves in essence, we learn righteous conduct through the Holy Spirit's provision in Scripture. Paul expresses concern for the church in Philippi, thanking them for their supportive relationship, particularly as primary supporters during his missionary journeys.

(7:47 - 10:05) Paul's Greeting and Thanksgiving

Steve begins reading from the NIV starting at Philippians 1:1. Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, address all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, including overseers (elders) and deacons, wishing them grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul thanks God every time he remembers them, praying with joy because of their partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. He expresses confidence that He who began a good work in them will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus, alluding to the end of time when Jesus returns for His disciples. The church is not a building but the called assembly of believers, with Jesus as their priest.

(10:05 - 12:23) Paul's Affection, Prayer, and Fruit of Righteousness

Continuing the reading, Paul states it is right to feel this way about them since he has them in his heart. Whether in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, they share in God's grace with him. God testifies to Paul's longing for them with the affection of Christ Jesus. The Philippian church supported Paul in his teaching and preaching. Paul's prayer is that their love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so they may discern what is best, be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. Steve explains that the fruit of righteousness contrasts with the works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5 (envy, jealousy, hatred, etc.). Eliminating these allows experience of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, and similar virtues from walking in the Spirit.

(12:23 - 16:32) Discerning Right from Wrong and Paul's Personal Prayer Practice

Steve stresses the need to discern right from wrong, sinful from righteous actions, achieved through Scripture study, as the Holy Spirit reveals God's will there. This discernment applies to decisions like attending certain movies, watching television programs, or participating in activities. He repeats Paul's prayer for abounding love in knowledge and insight leading to purity, blamelessness, and the fruit of righteousness. Steve shares his practice of praying for understanding and insight before reading Scripture or teaching/preaching, modeled after Paul, asking God to help grasp the Holy Spirit's message through the biblical writers.

(16:32 - 19:29) Advancement of the Gospel Despite Chains

Steve continues reading from verse 12. Paul wants the brothers and sisters to know that what happened to him has advanced the gospel. It has become clear to the whole palace guard and others that he is in chains for Christ. Because of this, most brothers and sisters have become more

confident in the Lord and proclaim the gospel without fear. God demonstrates strength, enabling Paul to endure without severe punishment, allowing fearless proclamation. Some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, others out of goodwill and love, knowing Paul defends the gospel. The former act from selfish ambition, insincerely, hoping to stir trouble for Paul in chains. Nevertheless, Paul rejoices that Christ is preached regardless of motive—false or true. He will continue to rejoice, knowing through their prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, his circumstances will turn out for deliverance. Paul eagerly expects and hopes not to be ashamed but to have courage so that Christ will be exalted in his body, whether by life or death. Steve clarifies "ashamed" refers to being mocked, but Paul trusts God's provision and preservation, anticipating vindication.

(19:31 - 20:52) Paul's Desire: To Live is Christ and to Die is Gain

Steve continues reading from Philippians 1:21, a familiar passage: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." If Paul continues living in the body, it means fruitful labor for him. He is torn between the two desires. He desires to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far, but it is more necessary for the Philippians that he remain in the body. Convinced of this, he knows he will remain and continue with them for their progress and joy in the faith, so that through his being with them again, their boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of him. Steve emphasizes he is not comparing himself to Paul but shares understanding of Paul's mindset. Steve loves being a preacher, presenting messages, and conducting Bible classes.

(20:52 - 23:31) Personal Reflections on Life, Death, and Preaching

Steve notes that due to health challenges and life experiences, he would welcome death because he is not afraid of it. Paul similarly lacks fear because, as a Christian, he knows God will welcome him into heaven. Believers have the same promise: walking in the light ensures Jesus' blood continually cleanses them, and God has promised heaven as the reward for remaining faithful. Steve has often prayed for God to take him anytime, as he is ready. He urges the congregation to share this confidence and be able to say they are ready, invoking "Maranatha" meaning "Come, Lord Jesus. Come quickly." As long as God has him remain, Steve will stand and present the lesson, just as Paul continues preaching God's word. Through his life on earth, God benefits as Paul (and Steve) broadens the kingdom's borders. Steve loves preaching, enjoys the message, and cherishes what God provides him to share: that he is heaven-bound, and listeners can be too by heeding the gospel.

(23:31 - 26:38) The Gospel Message of Redemption and Righteousness

The gospel calls people to come to God through Jesus, who spares them from the death sin brings. Jesus paid the debt for sins, justifying believers before God through mercy. God does not desire any to perish but all to come to everlasting life. Steve reiterates the call in Philippians 1:27 to conduct oneself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ regardless of circumstances. The gospel redeems from sinful life contrary to God, against which God's wrath is revealed (as in Romans 1). It offers repentance, becoming a disciple of Jesus, baptism for remission of sins, justification, and the ability to live a pleasing, righteous life.

(26:38 - 29:34) Newness of Life in Romans 6 and Steadfastness

Steve directs attention to Romans 6, which speaks of walking in newness of life by turning from the old sinful life to walk righteously and pleasing to God. It asks if we should continue sinning so grace

may increase—by no means. Those who have died to sin cannot live in it any longer. All baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death and buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised, believers too may live a new life. This ties back to Philippians: be faithful to the gospel. Steve returns to Philippians 1:27, urging conduct worthy of the gospel—standing firm in the one Spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel without fear of opponents. Such conduct signals opponents' destruction but believers' salvation by God. It has been granted to suffer for Christ, sharing the same struggle as Paul.

(29:34 - 32:21) Unity, Humility, and Concern for Others from Philippians 2

Steve turns to complete the thought from Philippians 2:1. If there is any encouragement from being united with Christ, comfort from His love, common sharing in the Spirit, tenderness, and compassion, then make his joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit; rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but to the interests of others. This is what God desires if believers appreciate forgiveness and benefits of being Christian. Paul will give Jesus' life as the example. Believers must not lord over others, be prideful, or compare superiority. Instead, show concern for one another's welfare, embodying love (agape), mercy, forgiveness, and grace, mirroring God's and Jesus' care.

(32:21 - 35:15) Christ's Example of Humility and Exaltation

In relationships, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. Though in very nature God, He did not consider equality with God something to be used to His advantage. He made Himself nothing, taking the nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. Found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross. Jesus, who was God (as in John 1:1, the Word was with God and was God), sharing attributes with the Father and Spirit, set aside equality to take human form as a servant to meet needs. God exalted Him to the highest place, giving Him the name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—in heaven, on earth, and under the earth—and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

(35:15 - 37:10) God's Glory, Providence, and Invitation

This glorifies God, who desires to show Himself strong. Believers rely entirely on Him for divine intervention, providence, and preservation, demonstrating to the world it need not be dog-eat-dog; God looks after His creation and meets needs. God adopts believers as sons and daughters when they become disciples of Jesus, per the Great Commission: go into all the world, make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; he who believes and is baptized shall be saved. Steve extends the invitation to respond—open to whosoever will, through God's grace and mercy. Those desiring prayers or expressing concerns are also invited. The congregation stands together to sing a song of encouragement.