

26-0712p Transcript

26-0712p - Paul's Letter to the Philippians, Part 2, Steve Cain

Bible Reader: Mike Mathis

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Paul's Letter to the Philippians, Part 2

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 1:20): Mike Mathis Philippians 4:10-13: (0:04) The scripture reading for this evening will be taken from Philippians 4 verses 10 through 13, (0:14) which reads, But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last your care for me has flourished (0:27) again, though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. (0:36) Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned	Continued in whatever state I am to be content. (0:47) I know how to be obese, and I know how to abound. (0:56) Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, (1:05) both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (1:17) And that completes the reading of God's Word. (1:20)
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Transcript (0:04 - 40:48), Preacher: Steve Cain

(1:26) Great audience. Good to see you back there. (1:30) We're talking about the letter that Paul wrote to the Philippian church, and we're looking into it (1:36) and studying the things that he wrote to them.

As I mentioned this morning, we're talking about (1:43) first-generation Christians, and perhaps you are a first-generation Christian. I know I am not. (1:52) As I mentioned this morning, I'm either a third or fourth generation.

My folks raised me as (2:00) Christian. They were a Christian, and their folks were Christians, and so I know that I'm at least (2:08) a third-generation Christian, but these people are first-generation Christians, and they do not (2:15) have everything that is necessary for them to operate from and knowledge of how to conduct (2:22) themselves in the presence of God. They don't have the Scriptures yet.

In fact, this is one of the (2:28) first letters of the Scriptures that Paul wrote, and Paul, in order to meet the needs of the (2:35) churches that he established, he was the first one to resort to writing letters concerning the (2:42) problems that he was made aware of, that they would write him and contact him and tell him that they (2:48) had a problem this way or that way, like the Corinthian letter, the first Corinthians and the (2:54) second Corinthians in particular, and so we know that he resorted to writing letters, and this is (3:00) a reason why we know what Paul is going to share with them concerning their behavior. We know that (3:10) when Paul was dealing with Timothy and Titus, that they were his protégés, and as they would (3:17) study under him, he would give them information, and he would tell them, now this is information that (3:24) you need to have because you need to tell and share with congregations that you're serving (3:29) how to worship and how to

come and go in the church, and so if you read Timothy and Titus, (3:36) you'll see that he is admonishing them to do that very thing, and so we have the access to (3:48) some of the information that Paul is going to be giving to them concerning how to conduct (3:55) themselves in the worship service itself. So we brought ourselves down to the second chapter (4:07) starting with verse 12, and I'm going to be reading from the New International Version, (4:13) and that's my favorite, so as we look at it, Paul is giving them advice on how to conduct (4:26) themselves and how to protect themselves, and we look at the first this morning.

So we're picking (4:33) up now with chapter two, starting with verse 12. I'm not going to really comment a whole lot. In (4:40) fact, I may skip a couple verses in order to be able to get through the book of Philippians, (4:48) because I really do want to get to the fourth chapter and comment concerning the things that (4:54) Paul is writing there concerning being anxious about things and being concerned about things, (5:00) and so as we reflect upon these things, but he's being very forthright, and he's really telling (5:06) them some of the things that they need to protect themselves from, and so I don't know exactly how (5:17) much time he spent with the church in Philippi, but we know that he was there for a little while, (5:26) so he's picking up, therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, (5:33) but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, (5:41) for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Notice (5:50) what he's saying there. What is the role that God is doing? He's divinely intervening and (5:58) providentially working. Divine intervention, providence, and preservation.

That's my favorite (6:03) phrase, and I'm looking at that. He's pointing out here that God prompts you. He's telling them, (6:11) God is prompting you to do these things.

Do them, and so I believe that he prompts us even today (6:19) to do things, and so it's probably one of the reasons that I can give you about why I am (6:27) preaching myself, because I'll give you an illustration, but it may be too premature for (6:33) this lesson, but as I was growing up, when I was a kid at home, I had two brothers and a sister. (6:43) There was four of us, and we would get up in the attic, and I would pretend like I was preaching (6:47) to them. I was probably eight years old, nine years old, and I was pretending like I was (6:52) preaching to them, but over the years, I would study, and I would ask my dad questions as we (7:00) were traveling to and from church.

We had a 30-mile ride to church every Sunday and every Wednesday, (7:07) so we had questions and answer time, and then, of course, I would sit in Bible class and pick up (7:13) things, but I wanted to go to school preaching because I knew that I did not have everything (7:19) that I needed, didn't have the training and the education that I needed in order to be able to be (7:25) a preacher. So I wanted to go, but my wife did not want to be a preacher's wife. She did not want to be (7:33) a preacher's wife, and she had seen too much, and so I didn't press the issue at all, but in the (7:45) meantime, I was very active in the congregation, and I was an elder at that time, too.

So then (7:51) in 1977, I am 36 years old at that time, and so my wife comes to me one day and says, (8:03) okay, let's go to school preaching, but she made a whole bunch of stipulations. (8:11) The stipulations were we had to have insurance, had to have support, had to have a place to live. (8:18) She didn't want to live in an apartment complex, and she didn't want to be in a house trailer park, (8:23) so that meant we had to have special housing somehow, some way, and I forget if there were (8:31) any other stipulations, but there were stipulations.

Those had to be met before we even considered (8:38) going to a school preaching. Well, a friend of ours went down to this school preaching in (8:44) West Monroe, Louisiana, and he knew that I wanted to be there and that my wife consented to be (8:55) there, so he started searching around, and he found answers to all the stipulations. (9:01) I even had an elder of our congregation come to me and says, your health insurance is going (9:08) to be covered.

I'm going to pay your insurance for all the time that you're there, and so (9:14) all of a sudden, I got support. I had enough money to promise to me to go, so we went in 1977. (9:25) How in the world we got there? Still got to be God's divine intervention in Providence.

(9:31) I don't care if you say it's happenstance, circumstances, or whatever. I believe it was (9:36) God's divine intervention in Providence and preservation, and there are so many other things (9:40) that have happened to me since I've been a preacher that I know it's God's divine intervention (9:48) in Providence and preservation, period. So, we get down there, and I'm enrolled.

As you know, (9:58) my support fizzled out on me. The only one supporting me at that time was the elder who (10:06) was paying my insurance and my mother. They were the only two that were sending us money, (10:16) but one of the elders down there provided us with a house, and he gave my wife a part-time job (10:24) cleaning.

He was a construction man, so he had her cleaning houses for him, so (10:32) when I graduated from the School of Preaching, believe it or not, I didn't owe one red cent. (10:44) When I walked away from there, I was unencumbered with loans or anything like that. (10:50) I meant to tell you this.

When I started to work for Coca-Cola, this was five years before, (10:59) so this was in '72, when I started to work for Coca-Cola, I was so far in debt, I didn't know (11:06) what I was going to do, and I landed this job at Coca-Cola, and in the first six months of my job (11:15) there, I had earned \$9,000. That's in 1972. I was second man in five years.

I was the second (11:27) highest paid man in that. When I went down to White Square Road to School of Preaching, (11:35) I was completely solvent. God saw to it.

I know God saw to it. I was completely solvent. I didn't (11:45) owe anybody.

I was a free man financially. I went down there, spent the two years with them through (11:52) their school, and came out of there completely solvent. Didn't owe a penny.

Now, how can I (12:00) explain that? Paul's going to show us the same thing. He's going to share with us his experience (12:09) as a man of God, with God with him, and so he's going to go on and he's going to be talking about (12:16) it. For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

(12:26) In verse 14, do everything without grumbling or arguing so that you may become blameless and pure, (12:35) children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. What did he say? Did you (12:42) catch that? No grumbling. No arguing.

What is grumbling? Complaining about who the preacher is. (12:57) Complaining what the song leader is. Complaining how the Lord's Supper is being served.

(13:01) Complaining about what this and that and whatever. That's grumbling. Complaining about who you have (13:09) to deal with.

Who you're sitting with. Who you're worshiping with. Grumbling.

Moses had a grumbler (13:16) in him, and God called him out, and he said, Moses is my man. You going to be with him or not? (13:27) And he says, you stand over there, and Moses will stand over here. If you're not going to (13:32) quit grumbling, I'll take care of you.

What happens to him? The earth opens up, swallows him. (13:41) I can't remember exactly the name of the person, but he swallowed him up. Him and his family and (13:47) everybody who was with him.

They were all grumblers. God swallowed them up. (13:54) God hates grumblers, and he doesn't want us to grumble.

He doesn't want us to be complainers, (14:03) arguing. So just do everything without grumbling and arguing. This is how we are to conduct (14:12) ourselves among ourselves.

Isn't that what he said earlier? To be concerned about one another. (14:17) Don't compare yourself with other people. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, (14:24) who did not grasp the thing to be equal with God.

So we're not to be grasping it to be equal (14:33) and consider it anything to be equal with one another. We don't compare ourselves with one (14:39) another. We concern ourselves with the well-being and welfare of one another, period.

So he says in (14:45) verse 14, do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless, pure, (14:52) children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then you will shine among (14:59) them like stars in the sky, as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to (15:08) boast on that on the day of Christ that I did not run in labor or labor in vain.

(15:17) But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming (15:23) from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. So you too should be glad and rejoice (15:32) with me. So this is an admonition that Paul is giving to the church there in Philippians.

He's (15:39) telling them don't grumble or argue. Let's slip on down to, he's going to be talking about how (15:51) Timothy is his right-hand man. He has no other person like him, that the other people that he (15:59) has run across are self-seekers.

Let's go to chapter 3. He's picking up in verse 1. (16:06) Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. It is no trouble for me to write (16:11) same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, (16:19) those mutilators of the flesh, for it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by His (16:28) Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh, though I myself have (16:36) reason to be, to have confidence in such flesh.

So what is he pointing out to us? He doesn't mind (16:44) reminding us what he taught us while he was with us. That's what John says, isn't it, in his letter (16:56) that I am going to, no, it was Peter.

Peter said it in his first epistle, that he was (17:05) going to remind them as long as he was alive, that he was going to continue to (17:10) provide them with the information that they need to know.

So if anybody thinks that they (17:17) have reason for confidence, here is Paul, this might be a good time to put in a little bit of (17:27) information concerning Paul and his background and so on. We know that Paul was a very active (17:35) person within the Sanhedrin as a Jewish individual, and we know that he was laboring (17:42) and working his way to important positions, and so he's pointing this out to us, that he was (17:54) a very, very aggressive individual who strived to be important. He was someone that they all (18:03) looked at and considered, and so he's pointing out here, if someone else thinks they have reason (18:09) to put confidence in the flesh, I have more.

I was circumcised on the eighth day of the people (18:17) of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in regard to the law of Pharisee, (18:24) as for zeal, persecuting the church, as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. (18:34) And so he had worked and strived to become an important person within the Jewish faith. (18:41) Do people within the church strive to become important within the church? Paul would say, (18:50) no.

Don't strive to become an important person within the church. Let God do that to you. (18:58) Let God promote you.

What you need to do is to become a faithful servant of God. (19:07) But he says here, but whatever were gains to me, I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. (19:16) What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, (19:24) my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things.

In other words, when he became a Christian and (19:32) follower of Jesus and become a disciple of Jesus, the Jewish faith dropped him. (19:38) They have nothing to do with him anymore. And he could care less.

Why? Because he knows (19:46) that he is on the right side. He is with Jesus and he's a disciple of Jesus. And he is a complete (19:54) 100% believer that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God, and that he can provide us with (20:01) salvation that we need.

So he says, I consider this garbage that I may gain Christ and be found (20:10) in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through (20:17) faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. Verse 10, I want to (20:26) know Christ. Yes, to know the power of his resurrection and the participation in his (20:33) sufferings becoming like him in his death.

And so somehow attaining to the resurrection from the (20:40) dead. Not that I already obtained all this or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on (20:49) to take hold of what of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, (20:55) I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it, but one thing I do, forgetting what is (21:03) behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God (21:12) has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (21:15)

(21:15) The thing we need to recognize here is that when Paul (21:19) became a Christian on the road of Damascus, when he saw Jesus and when he was baptized, (21:30) he didn't know everything. He didn't know everything. The Holy Spirit had to provide (21:38) it with him.

And the Holy Spirit is providing him with experience. He had to experience things. (21:45) And he's pointing out to us, I haven't finished learning things yet.

Not that I have obtained (21:51) everything. I don't have it. But I know one thing, the Holy Spirit is working through me.

(21:57) God is using me. And this is what I want you to know. And so the Holy Spirit is providing him (22:04) with the information that he needs to write to this church.

And the church is receiving (22:09) the letters from him. He does not have it all together yet. One of the points that I make out (22:17) for the fact that he hasn't put it all together is found in 2 Corinthians.

If you want to take (22:23) a look at 2 Corinthians with me, very first verse, or first chapter rather, down to maybe (22:49) in the second verse. Oh yes, the first verse. And we're looking at verse 8 in particular.

Verse 8. (23:00) We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced (23:07) in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, (23:17) so that we despaired for life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death.

(23:29) But this, and he's pointing out now, God wanted us to experience this. (23:36) God wanted us to know this experience. Says, but this happened that we might not rely on ourselves, (23:47) but on God, who raises the dead.

He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, (23:57) and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us. (24:07) As you help us by your prayers, then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious (24:15) favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

What is Paul pointing out to us? He's learning. (24:26) He's got to the point where, I haven't experienced this. I've got to wait on God.

He was relying on (24:33) his own ability to make ends meet. He was relying on his own intellect, his abilities. And so, (24:42) he and his friends found themselves in a situation that they despaired, that they were fearful that (24:50) they were going to die.

They didn't know the answers to it. They didn't have it. (24:55) But God brought them out of it, didn't he? And he's giving God credit for the divine intervention, (25:01) providence, and preservation of saving him and his friends from this death, supposedly death.

(25:10) He spared them. And Paul says, not only did I experience it then, I've learned to experience, (25:17) to wait on God from here on out. So, he's learning.

And he's having things brought to his (25:28) attention. He's bringing this up. And this is one of the reasons why I love Philippians letter, (25:34) because he brings this up to us concerning the fact that he has had some experiences that (25:44) he had not really shared with anybody other than he's just sharing it now with the Philippians (25:52) church at Philippi.

So, as we reflect upon that, let's skip some scriptures here because I (26:01) really do want to take

advantage of this particular situation. It is believed, (26:12) as Paul points out, that he's grateful for them supporting him. He's grateful for them (26:18) and that they apparently somewhere along the way quit supporting him.

For what reason? We can only (26:27) surmise. The reason is that they probably, the Philippian church itself, fell on hard (26:33) times themselves and they were just barely making it out on their own themselves and could not come (26:39) up with enough money to help support him and his entourage as they were traveling. And so, (26:46) Paul, in this particular chapter here and in the ensuing verses is going to point out, (26:52) I am so grateful that you have had the opportunity to resume your support for me.

So, (27:02) let's pick up with verse 10. I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern (27:16) for me. In other words, they've renewed their support for him.

I rejoiced greatly in the Lord (27:24) that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned that you had no (27:31) opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need for, now notice Paul's (27:40) writing and what he's going to admonish us to do and take on the same attitude that he has taken on (27:48) because he believes in the divine intervention, providence and preservation of God.

That's my (28:01) in need for I've learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need (28:12) and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and (28:21) every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in one.

I can do (28:29) all things through him who gives me strength. But what did he learn? He learned to be content. (28:41) Content, that's a lost art to be content.

Are you content? He says you need to get to the point (28:54) where you can trust in God and know that he's going to meet your needs period and be content. (29:02) And so he's pointing that out for us. He's alluding back to the experience he had in Corinth.

(29:11) And so there he is. So then he picks up in verse 14. Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.

(29:24) Moreover, as you Philippians know in the early days of your acquaintances with the gospel, (29:31) when I set out for Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving (29:39) except you only. For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once (29:48) when I was in need. Not that I desire your gifts.

What I desire is that more be credited to your (29:59) account. I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied now that (30:07) I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent.

They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable (30:16) sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his (30:23) glory in Christ Jesus. And that reminds me, you know, and I know I've mentioned this many times.

(30:31) In 2 Corinthians, we see the 8th and 9th chapter where Paul is talking about (30:37) meeting the needs of the church in Jerusalem because of a famine that has come. And he's (30:43) collecting

money. And he's collecting money from other churches to go down there and get to (30:49) meet the needs of the church in Jerusalem.

And he's pointing out, especially in the 9th chapter (30:55) in particular, that he points out that God knows what we're giving and he's going to (31:04) replenish us. I mentioned this the other day. I can remember having mentioned this.

(31:12) That God is saying, you give and I will replenish. You give and I will replenish. (31:20) And that is one of the things that he keeps pointing out to us in 2 Corinthians, the 8th and 9th (31:26) chapter.

Keep giving and I'll make sure you have the opportunity to give and to meet somebody (31:33) else's needs when it comes up. You give and I will replenish. So that's what Paul is trying to (31:41) point out here to them.

So he's also pointing out that we do not need to be anxious about (31:49) anything. What are we anxious for? We need to realize that when God created the heavens and (31:57) the earth, and Scott's been studying and giving lessons concerning this in Genesis, the first (32:03) chapter and the first 10 chapters, I believe it is, that when you look at the days of the creation, (32:12) God is setting up the system to support you and me after he's all through. And that there's nothing (32:23) that we need that he hasn't supplied and met the needs for.

So when he put Adam and Eve (32:31) in the Garden of Eden, everything was already for him. Man did not need anything. All he had to do (32:40) was toil the land.

And that's all we got to do today is toil the land. Don't worry about those (32:49) things. Notice what Jesus says, and I'm sure you're familiar with this one, Tom, in Matthew, (32:55) the 6th chapter, where Jesus is talking about not being concerned about what you're going to eat (33:05) or what you're going to wear or where you're going to live.

Look at Matthew, the 6th chapter, (33:11) Sermon on the Mount, picking up at verse 25. And this is Jesus, and he's telling us, (33:23) and we can believe Jesus, can't we? Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, (33:31) what you will eat or drink or about your body, what you will wear. (33:37) Is not life more than food and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air.

(33:46) They do not sow or reap or store away in barns. And yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. (33:53) Are you not much more valuable than they? Can anyone of you, by worrying, add a single hour (34:02) to your life? And why? Why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow? (34:11) They do not labor or spin.

And yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor (34:18) was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, (34:24) which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothes you, (34:32) you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink (34:40) or what shall we wear? For the pagans run after all these things. And your Heavenly Father knows (34:47) that you need them.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will (34:57) be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about (35:04) itself. Each day is enough trouble of its own.

So it's pointing out to us that God meets our needs. (35:18) If you can bear with me a little bit more about my own personal experiences, (35:25) when I went to work for Coca-Cola as a driver salesman, I was so deep in debt, I didn't know (35:34) where I was going to go, what I was going to do. All my creditors needed to do was just press the (35:40) issue and I was bankrupt.

I had no idea. So I'm driving and I have the responsibility of (35:48) of filling Coke machines, cans, bottles, plus stocking shelves and grocery stores (35:59) and various other things. And whenever I get to a vending machine and I open up the door, (36:06) I'd see several coins on the ground.

I said, ah, that's mine. It really wasn't. It was money that (36:20) customers put in and it missed the slot and went to that.

And nine times out of 10, (36:25) they probably went to the grocery store owner and asked for their quarter or how much money they (36:32) lost. So that money is laying there on the ground. I was the only one who had a key to open the door (36:40) anyway.

The store owner couldn't do it. So I'm seeing this money laying there on the ground (36:45) and I say to myself, oh, that's fine. You know what? All of a sudden it dawned on me.

(36:55) Christians need to be honest. Honesty is the number one policy for a Christian, period. (37:06) There's no question in my mind.

So after I realized that those quarters on the ground (37:18) were not mine and I needed to be turning them in to the store owner, I started doing that. (37:27) And I started being just as honest as I could be, just as honest as I could be. You know what? (37:35) My sales started increasing.

I'm riding down the highway. I'm saying, God, (37:47) I am worn out to the bone from delivering Coke and everything. You can quit blessing me now.

(37:54) You can quit blessing me now. I believe that all that a Christian needs to do is make 100% effort (38:07) to be honest and a lot of their problems will be solved, period. I don't care how, (38:17) where you need to be honest.

I don't care what God wants us to be honest. 100%. So as we reflect (38:27) upon this Paul, or as Jesus is pointing out to us that we do not need to be concerned about these (38:35) things.

And Paul is pointing out to us in the Philippian letter that we do not need to be (38:46) anxious about anything. Is that possible? Is that possible? I'm telling you it is. (39:08) What pleases God? This is another favorite phrase of mine.

What pleases God? Hebrews (39:18) the 11th chapter points out, I believe it's in verse four where he's talking of what pleases (39:31) God is to believe that he is and that he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. (39:41) We got to trust him and he will test us. I believe God will test us to see (39:52) just how much we put faith in him.

He will test us. That's my lesson today. (40:09) There may be someone in the audience this evening that needs to respond to the gospel, (40:16) to Jesus' invitation to become a disciple of his and to put him on in baptism for the remission (40:25) of our sins.

And if there's anyone who needs to do that, we'd like to help you out because we (40:30) have the water and the garments and everything is ready to assist you. And if you have a need to (40:38) ask

for the prayers of the congregation or meet the needs of anybody, please do (40:43) come forward and make that known. But together we stand and sing the psalm of encouragement. (40:48)