

Session 2. What do you remember about me? What do I remember about you?

The real HEART of the Book of Philippians is “TO REMEMBER” and Remember with “Joy.”

Philippians 1:1, “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:”

“Paul’s word for “servants” (*douloi*) does not refer to hired household help but is the term commonly used in ancient times for “slaves.”

In the Old Testament the term “slave” sometimes appears as a title of honor to indicate the special relationship of great heroes like Moses, Joshua, and David to God (Josh. 14:7; 24:29; Ps. 89:3).

In the Greco-Roman context of Paul and his Philippian readers, it would have had unmistakable overtones of humility and submission.

Paul’s readers would probably have understood the term as Paul used it here to refer to people conscripted into the service of Christ instead of into service to sin (Rom. 6:16 – 23; Gal. 4:1 – 9; 5:1).

To all the saints—To all those consecrated to God—To those who are in Christ Jesus. The Greek word for saints is *hagios*, which literally means “holy.” However, in the right sense of the word used here, it would mean all those who have been changed, who are different, and who are set apart.

What makes the Christian different from other people is that they are people who are consecrated to God because of their special relationship to Jesus Christ—and that is what every Christian should be.

“But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy,” (1 Peter 1:15-16).

Philippians 1:2, “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”.

Grace and peace, two words that every Christian should rejoice in. It was grace that saved us when we did not deserve it. It is peace that we have when we know that God has accepted us because we have accepted His Son and the actions both took to redeem us. Acknowledging that God is the Father and Jesus Christ as His Son is imperative in understanding where grace and peace comes from.

Philippians 1:3-11, *“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may 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.”*

—Note that *remembrance and gratitude* are bound up together.

According to Paul, he only remembered the good attributes from his time with them and that he has happy memories of them as they have been in partnership with him to further the gospel.

It is not something that has diminished, it is something that Paul saw and felt from the first day of their partnership in Christ until the present.

Remembrance with joy. Now...this is Christian Joy!

Christian JOY is painted throughout the Book of Philippians.

Let us look at this picture. There is the:

1. **Joy of Christian prayer** (1:4), *“In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy”*—the joy of bringing those we love to the mercy seat of God.
2. **Joy that Jesus Christ is preached** (1:18), *“But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.”*—Adding, even multiplying people into the Kingdom by the preaching of Jesus Christ.
3. **Joy of Faith** (1:25), *“Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.”*—If Christianity does not make a man happy, it will not make him anything at all. Faith is believing you already have what you can’t see and feel.
4. **Joy of seeing Christians in fellowship together** (2:2), *“then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.”*—There is peace for no one where there are broken human relationships and strife between individuals. There is not a lovelier sight than a family linked in love to each other or a Church whose members are one with each other because they are one in Christ Jesus their Lord.
5. **Joy of suffering for Christ** (2:17), *“But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you.”*—In the hour of martyrdom while in the flames Polycarp prayed, “I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast judged me worthy of this hour.” Would we be willing to be baptized with the suffering Jesus went through?

Jesus said to them, “You don’t know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?” (Mark 10:38)...This was said when John and James, sons of Zebedee, asked to sit at Jesus right hand and left hand when he (Jesus) came into glory.

6. **Joy of the news of (or from) the loved one** (2:28), *“Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety.”*—Life is full of separations, and there is always joy when news comes to us of those loved ones from whom we are temporarily separated. Joy can come with a postage stamp, an email, a phone call. It is a choice.
7. **Joy of Christian hospitality** (2:29), *“So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him,”*—The open door policy for the Christian who is hurting. Be hospitable, but always be attentive to what the Lord and good common sense tells you.
8. **Joy of the man in Christ** (3:1), *“Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you.”*—It is human nature to be happy when we are with the person whom we love; and Christ is the lover of our souls from whom nothing in time or eternity can ever separate us.
9. **Joy of the man who has won one soul for Christ** (4:1), *“Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!”*—The Philippians are Paul’s joy and crown, for he was the means of bringing them to Jesus Christ. For the Christian, evangelism is not a duty; it is a joy.
10. **Joy in a gift** (4:10), *“I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.”*—The joy does not lie so much in the gift itself, as in being remembered and realizing someone cares.

The idea of Christian Partnership is strongly stressed in Philip. 1:3-11

There are certain things which Christians share:

1. **Christians are partners in grace.** We owe a common debt to the grace of God.
2. **Christians are partners in the work of the gospel.** We share a task; that being of furthering the gospel by defending it against the attacks of the enemies and by building up the faith and devotion of its friends.
3. **Christians are partners in suffering for the gospel.** Although we may never have to suffer as do Christians in foreign lands, we

must stand for truth and pray earnestly for their release from captives and the atrocities they are experiencing.

- 4. Christians are partners with Christ.** This is the love that cannot be more exemplified than giving one's life for the cause of Christ.

The Christian Progress and the Christian Goal:

- Paul's prayer for his people has always been that their love would grow greater every day (1:9-10), "And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,"
- His prayer was that they would grow to the point of being able to distinguish right from wrong. Note: Look at where they were coming from and where they are to go.
- Grow to the point of not causing others to stumble—meaning "not causing others to fall into sin or yield to temptation."
- **The final aim/goal for the Christian:** (1:11), *filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.*—To live such a life that the glory and the praise are given to God; i.e. no credit for man himself—he is what he is only by the grace of God.

The hardest thing for man to give up is his pride of ownership.

"A proud man is always looking down on things and people; and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you."
— C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

"All men make mistakes, but a good man yields when he knows his course is wrong, and repairs the evil. The only crime is pride."
— Sophocles, *Antigone*

"Through pride we are ever deceiving ourselves. But deep down below the surface of the average conscience a still, small voice says to us, something is out of tune."
— C.G. Jung

"But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'" James 4:6

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