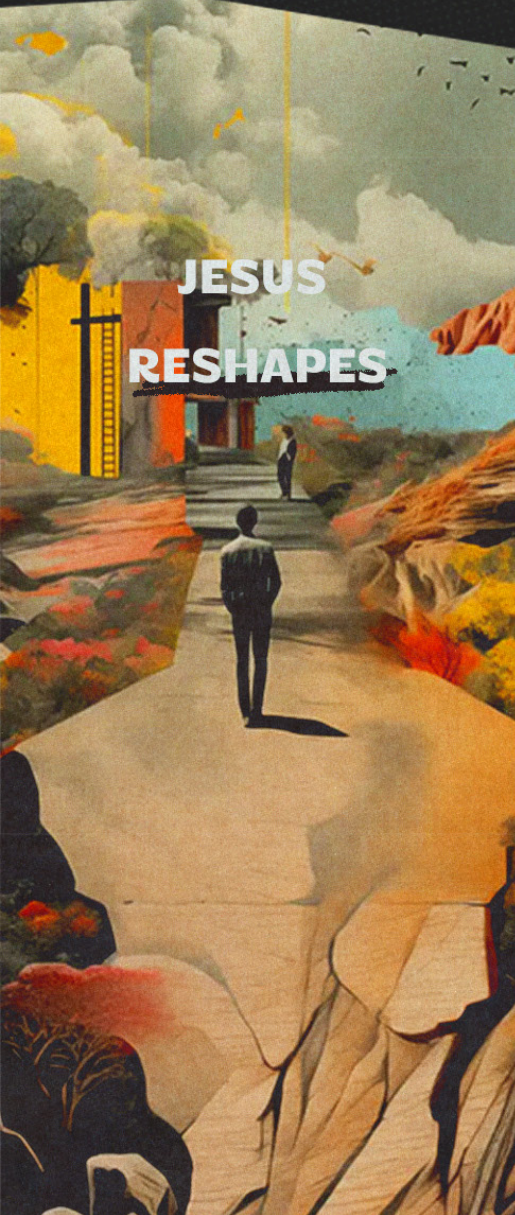


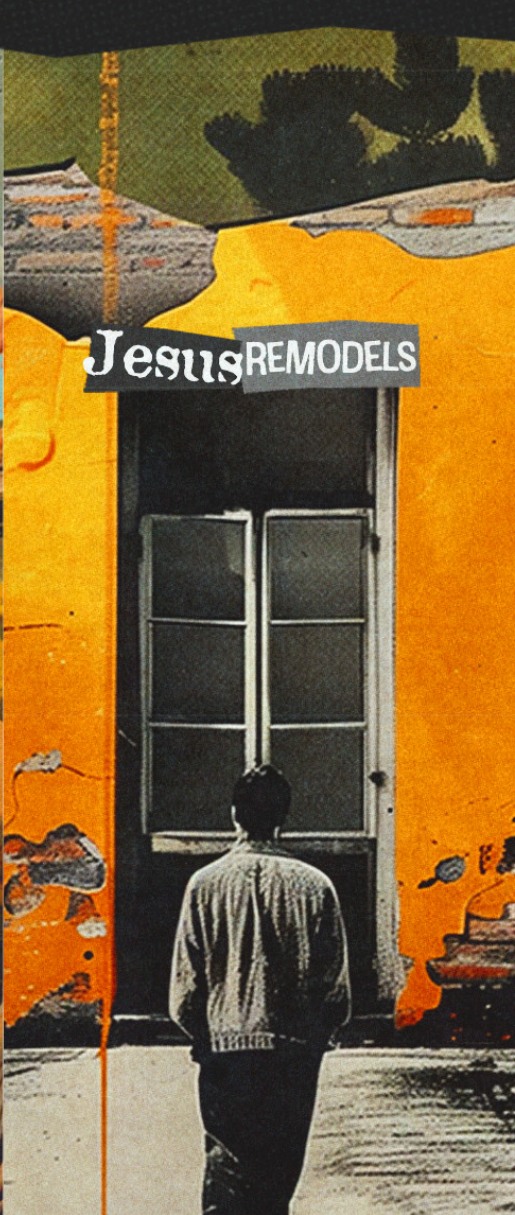


THE POWER TO CHANGE

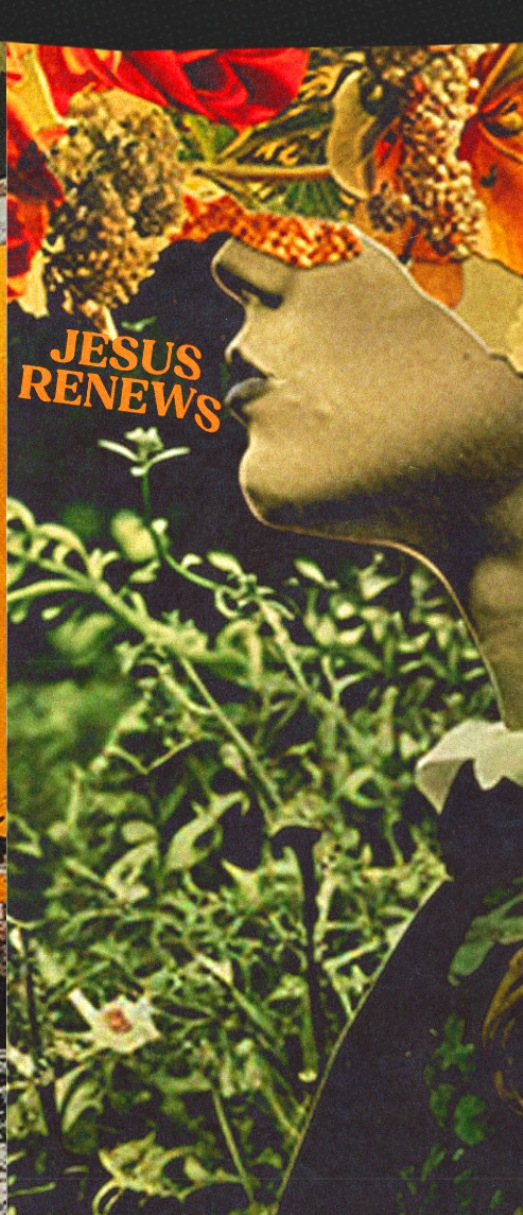
A SERIES ON PHILIPPIANS



JESUS
RESHAPES



Jesus REMODELS



JESUS
RENEWS

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Charleston, WV

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PHILIPPIANS: THE POWER TO CHANGE

JESUS RESHAPES

My Partnerships (1:1-11)
My Perspective (1:12-26)
My Purpose (1:27-30)

JESUS REMODELS

My Heart (2:1-11)
My Life (2:12-18)
My Service (2:19-30)

JESUS RENEWS

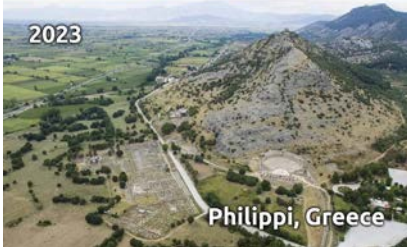
My Story (3:1-14)
My Goals (3:15-21)
My Actions (4:1-9)
My Future (4:10-23)

Jesus promises transformation and change as we follow Him. Every book of the Bible gives us a growing understanding of God's character and plan for His people. Philippians gives us a picture of how Jesus **reshapes, remodels, and renews** His followers as we seek to live in a manner worthy of the Gospel (1:27). Paul shares his personal testimony of change (3:4-11), Jesus' example of humility invokes change (2:5-11), and God Himself is at work in us to change and conform us into His image (3:13). The power of change is found in the power of Jesus! Let's dive into Philippians and ask God to grow us, transform us, and change us.

The devotions line up with the sermon series, but can also stand alone as a study of Philippians. Spend time reading and **interacting with the text** and then work through the **discussion questions**. The study is designed for personal devotions and/or group study.

Preparing to Study: It is important to understand the historical context of a letter in order to properly understand and apply each verse and section. The big aspects of historical context include the situation of the **author** (circumstances, date of authorship, and relationship to the recipient), the context of the **audience** (religious background, current struggles, and relationship to the author), and the **occasion** for the writing of the letter.

Philippians: Historical Background



Computer-generated image of Philippi as it may have appeared in 200 BC alongside its modern-day ruins. Originally called Crenides, Philippi was renamed by Philip II of Macedon in 356 BC.

Author

Paul is considered the author by all conservative commentators. While writing to the Philippians, he is in prison and is having an effective outreach with the guard. Paul plants this church with the help of several locals who trust Christ. The story of Paul and the Philippian church is located in Acts 16. Read Acts 16 and answer the questions found in the “Intro to Philippians” study for a deeper dive.

Date

Dating Philippians depends on where Paul is imprisoned when he wrote this letter. Most likely he was in Rome, but there is also the possibility that he was in Caesarea (Acts 23:33, 24:27), or Ephesus. Philippians commentator George Guthrie considers Rome to be the correct location, but if this were disproved then he would point to Ephesus as the clear second choice. Several think that Ephesus has a good possibility of being the actual location, especially because of its closeness to Philippi (Carson, Moo, and Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* by Zondervan). Depending on the location, the possible dates include:

- Rome – 61-63
- Ephesus – 55
- Caesarea – 56-61

The Philippians

The recipients first hear the Gospel from Paul and his traveling companions. Often Paul would start in the local synagogue in a new location. Paul used unconventional methods of evangelism as Philippi had a very low population of Jews. Paul met Lydia by the river and she and her household received Christ. Through unexpected circumstances, a jailer and his family trust the Lord. From this unlikely bunch the church began.

Paul commends the church for their generosity as they have given gifts to support Paul and other churches in need of help. Paul is most likely referring to them in Romans when he talks about the believers in Macedonia who are giving significantly to the Jerusalem believers in need (Romans 15:26-27).

Location

“Philippi, in northeastern Greece, was the first major center where Paul preached the gospel in Europe” (O’Brien, 3). It was named after Philip 2, the father of Alexander the Great. It was relatively insignificant until it was taken over by the Roman Empire. Many soldiers lived there. The city was eventually modeled after Rome itself on a much smaller scale.

Philippi was a city tied up in polytheism. They worshiped the Greek gods, but gave them Latin names (Jupiter, Minerva, & Mars). We often discuss the difficulty of evangelizing our culture, but what a paradigm shift it would have been to wrestle with a polytheist about the reality of one all powerful Triune God.

“Philippi was a colony rather than a commercial center – since there was apparently no regular synagogue congregation (for which ten men were required); instead, Paul found an informal meeting place outside the city by the river Gangites where several women met on the Sabbath for prayer (Acts 16:13)” (O’Brien).



Occasion

It is hard to be sure of the occasion. There appears to be several possibilities. Opponents are trying to influence the church (3:2-3). Paul reminds them to put their confidence in Christ and live their lives in a manner worthy of the Gospel (1:27). It could simply be that Paul wants to send a thank you note with Epaphroditus for their support and generosity. Other possibilities are considered below.

Major Themes

- Rejoicing & Joy in all circumstances.
- A life focused on joy and contentment in Christ and not on worldly gain.
- Setting worldly things aside and pursuing Christ.
- Thanks for financial participation in the furtherance of the Gospel (2:25).
- Epaphroditus' return and plans to send Timothy (2:25-30 & 2:19-24)
- Encouragement through prayer, concern, and love.
- The advance of the Gospel through hardships and sufferings.
- The supremacy of Christ in life and death, in wealth and poverty, and over heaven and earth.
- Warnings against false teachings (1:28, 3:1).

Doctrines Addressed

- The Humiliation of Christ
- The Glorification of Christ
- The Lordship of Christ
- Our Glorified Body
- Sanctification (1:6 & 2:12-13)

Intro to Philippians

The Background of the Philippian Church

Read Acts 16:6-12

What do we learn about Philippi?

Acts 16:13-15

What do we learn about Lydia?

Jews in Philippi

- Paul often began his preaching in the synagogues (needed 10 Jewish men).
- They had to go outside of the city on the Sabbath
- Probably very few Jews.
- City may be hostile to Jews and their monotheism.

Acts 16:16-24

What do we learn about Philippi from what occurs?

How would you respond if you were with Paul in verses 22-24?

Acts 16:25-34

How did Paul & Silas respond to the persecution? What was the result?

How can we get to the point that we respond like Paul in difficult circumstances?

Could you answer the question that the Jailer asked in verse 30?

Verse 40

Who were the first people in the church of Philippi?

What is significant about this collection of people?

Where did they first meet?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- *Underline everything you learn about Paul.*
- *Bracket everything you learn about the Philippians.*
- *Put parentheses around everything Paul says about their "partnership."*

- 1:1 Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus: To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons.
- 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3 I give thanks to my God for every remembrance of you,
- 4 always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer,
- 5 because of your **partnership** in the gospel from the first day until now.
- 6 I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
- 7 It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, and you are all **partners** with me in grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and establishment of the gospel.
- 8 For God is my witness, how I deeply miss all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.
- 9 And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment,
- 10 so that you can determine what really matters and can be pure and blameless in the day of Christ,
- 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that [comes] through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Interpreting & Applying the Text

1. What do we learn about the Philippians? Who is leading the church?

2. What is the source of Paul's joy and thankfulness?

3. What do we learn about their **partnership** (participation / fellowship) in the Gospel?

4. **Partnership / Participation** – is the Greek word *koinonia*. It is used to express deep fellowship, community and commonality. It expresses relationship and purpose.

The Gospel brings us together as a **family** who shares in the grace and salvation of Jesus. The Gospel also puts us **on mission** to help others follow Jesus. The family matters and the mission matters. There must be deep appreciation, joy, and encouragement between Christians while at the same time we are deeply committed to making more disciples.

Who would you describe as your spiritual family? What are some of your next steps for growing that family (as described in these verses)?

5. How can you and your spiritual family live more on mission? How can you partner together in making more of the Gospel?

6. How does this passage reshape your understanding of Gospel partnerships in your life?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- *Underline Paul's hardships.*
- *Bracket the benefits of these hardships.*
- *Circle all of Paul's references to his life or death.*

- 1:12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has actually resulted in the advancement of the gospel,
- 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard, and to everyone else, that my imprisonment is for Christ.
- 14 Most of the brothers in the Lord have gained confidence from my imprisonment and dare even more to speak the message fearlessly.
- 15 Some, to be sure, preach Christ out of envy and strife, but others out of good will.
- 16 These do so out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel;
- 17 the others proclaim Christ out of rivalry, not sincerely, seeking to cause [me] trouble in my imprisonment.
- 18 What does it matter? Just that in every way, whether out of false motives or true, Christ is proclaimed. And in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice
- 19 because I know this will lead to my deliverance through your prayers and help from the Spirit of Jesus Christ.
- 20 My eager expectation and hope is that I will not be ashamed about anything, but that now as always, with all boldness, Christ will be highly honored in my body, whether by life or by death.
- 21 For me, living is Christ and dying is gain.
- 22 Now if I live on in the flesh, this means fruitful work for me; and I don't know which one I should choose.
- 23 I am pressured by both. I have the desire to depart and be with Christ-which is far better-
- 24 but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you.
- 25 Since I am persuaded of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your advancement and joy in the faith,
- 26 so that, because of me, your confidence may grow in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Interpreting & Applying the Text

1. How is the Gospel being advanced?
2. What is Paul's desire according to 1:18? Is this surprising to you in any way?
3. Philippians 1:19 – Read 2 Corinthians 1:11 and Philemon 22. What do we learn about prayer according to these verses?
4. What is the benefit of living? What is the benefit of dying?
5. How does this change of perspective of life and death impact the way you daily live?
6. How has this passage reshaped your perspective?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- *Underline the ways we “live your life in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ” in these verses.*

1:27 Just one thing: live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or am absent, I will hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, working side by side for the faith of the gospel,

28 not being frightened in any way by your opponents. This is evidence of their destruction, but of your deliverance—and this is from God.

29 For it has been given to you on Christ’s behalf not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him,

30 having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear about me.

Interpreting & Applying the Text

1. **“Just one thing”** can also be translated “only” or “make this your focus” (Greek: *monon*). It creates emphasis for what follows. Philippians 1:27 can be considered the central commandment and theme of the book. This verse must reshape our purpose.

It is easy to take 1:27 and try to fill in what we believe it means to **“walk in a manner worthy of the Gospel,”** but Paul outlines what this looks like in the life of a believer.

What does it look like for a group of believers to “stand firm in one spirit”?

2. What happens when a group of Christians stand firm in a common belief, but are not **“working side by side for the faith of the Gospel”**?

3. Why do we often believe the right things, but they do not translate into our daily priorities and actions?

4. “To suffer” (Greek: *pascho*) – this word describes suffering on the behalf of another, hence “for Him.” The foundation of being able to suffer is our belief and trust in Jesus (an active committed confidence and reliance on Christ. (Guthrie, 140). Suffering is not abnormal or an abandonment of God, rather it is expected in the life of a Christian.

Paul is not calling us to suffer for the sake of suffering, but to suffer **for** Jesus. What kind of suffering is Paul talking about in this verse? How does it relate to Paul (1:30)?

5. How does this passage reshape the purpose for my life? What practical changes do I need to make?

[INTERACT] **With the Text**

- *Number the "if" statements in 2:1 and the appropriate responses (the -ing words) listed in verse 2. (You should find 4 of each.)*
- *Underline the ways that Jesus demonstrated humility.*

- 2:1 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,
- 2 fulfill my joy by thinking the same way, having the same love, sharing the same feelings, focusing on one goal.
- 3 Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves.
- 4 Everyone should look out not [only] for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.
- 5 Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus,
- 6 who, existing in the form of God, did not consider equality with God as something to be used for His own advantage.
- 7 Instead He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when He had come as a man in His external form,
- 8 He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a cross.
- 9 For this reason God also highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name,
- 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow—of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth—
- 11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

INTERPRETING & APPLYING THE TEXT

1. How do the four **"if"** statements in verse 2:1 support and encourage the actions desired in verse 2?
2. What is the **"one goal"**?
3. Our humility and concern for others is foundational for Christian unity while pride and selfishness destroy Christian unity. There is effort necessary - we are to **"consider"** and **"look out"** for the interests of others (3-4). What are some ways and examples of how we can make more effort?
4. What are the ways that Jesus demonstrated His humility?
5. **"He emptied Himself"** has been interpreted many different ways. Some have taught that Jesus became less than fully God while on earth. It is important to understand that Jesus did not lose any divine qualities. He chose not to use some of His power and attributes for a period of time and lived dependent upon the Father and the Spirit. Jesus did not become "less than," rather He (in humility) "took on" flesh and lived under some of its limitations while He lived on earth. His majesty, value, and divine nature are fully seen in the bowing of every knee in worship (10-11).
How do the realities of 9-11 impact the way you live today?
6. How does the humility of Jesus remodel your heart?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- *Underline all of Paul's instructions and commands.*
- *Bracket everything that Paul says about his perspective on ministry.*

2:12 So then, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now even more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God who is working in you, [enabling you] both to will and to act for His good purpose.

14 Do everything without grumbling and arguing,

15 so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world.

16 Hold firmly the message of life. Then I can boast in the day of Christ that I didn't run in vain or labor for nothing.

17 But even if I am poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you.

18 In the same way you also should rejoice and share your joy with me.

INTERPRETING & APPLYING THE TEXT

1. **“So then”** or “Accordingly” connects this passage to the previous section that began in 1:27 with the central command to **“live your life in a manner worthy of the Gospel.”**

“Work out your own salvation” – does this mean that we save ourselves? Is it up to us to transform ourselves?

2. **“For it is God who is working in you”** – our efforts are to be understood in light of what God is enabling and empowering us to do. **“For”** signifies that this truth is the foundation for the exhortation in verse 12. God receives the credit, salvation and sanctification is a work of God. We are called to put forth effort, all of our effort, but we need to understand that it is only with His power, guidance and strength that we can change. Our power for change is Jesus.

In 1:5 Paul expresses thankfulness of their partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now. Their love had been growing since the first day (1:9). But Paul strongly states in 1:6 that Jesus started the good work (salvation) and He will continue it until completion (sanctification).

“With fear and trembling” – Why would we have fear? Is this a fear of rejection or loss of salvation? These particular words are often used in the LXX (Greek Old Testament) to describe man in the presence of God. This shows the utmost seriousness of Paul’s exhortation, because God is in their midst.

How do we understand and describe the process of spiritual growth? What is our role and how would you describe God’s role?

3. What makes you grumble? What does it say about our view of God when we grumble?

4. What does 2:17 teach us about our perspective on life and ministry?

5. How does this passage remodel our life?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- Circle the names of Paul's co-laborers.
- Underline what you learn about each of them.

- 2:19 Now I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon so that I also may be encouraged when I hear news about you.
- 20 For I have no one else like-minded who will genuinely care about your interests;
- 21 all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.
- 22 But you know his proven character, because he has served with me in the gospel ministry like a son with a father.
- 23 Therefore, I hope to send him as soon as I see how things go with me.
- 24 And I am convinced in the Lord that I myself will also come quickly.
- 25 But I considered it necessary to send you Epaphroditus—my brother, co-worker, and fellow soldier, as well as your messenger and minister to my need—
- 26 since he has been longing for all of you and was distressed because you heard that he was sick.
- 27 Indeed, he was so sick that he nearly died. However, God had mercy on him, and not only on him but also on me, so that I would not have one grief on top of another.
- 28 For this reason, I am very eager to send him so that you may rejoice when you see him again and I may be less anxious.
- 29 Therefore, welcome him in the Lord with all joy and hold men like him in honor,
- 30 because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up what was lacking in your ministry to me.

INTERPRETING & APPLYING THE TEXT

The primary command of Philippians is to *“live in a manner worthy of the Gospel.”* This is accomplished in our service to others.

- Paul has encouraged the Philippians because of their partnership in the Gospel.
- He has set himself as an example of serving and devoting oneself to helping others grow in the Gospel.
- Jesus is given as the ultimate example of a servant as He lived with humility and selflessness.
- Here we are introduced to two more examples of those who **serve** and have partnered in the work of the Gospel.

1. In what ways does Timothy reflect 1:27 and 2:3-4?

2. What can we learn and change from Timothy’s example?

3. What do we learn about Epaphroditus and his example?

4. What is your next step to serving others with the Gospel in your life?

7. How has this passage helped remodel your heart to serve?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- *Circle the descriptions of the false teachers.*
- *Underline Paul's possible reasons for confidence in the flesh.*

- 3:1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write to you again about this is no trouble for me and is a protection for you.
- 2 Watch out for “dogs,” watch out for evil workers, watch out for those who mutilate the flesh.
- 3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God, boast in Christ Jesus, and do not put confidence in the flesh—
- 4 although I once had confidence in the flesh too. If anyone else thinks he has grounds for confidence in the flesh, I have more:
- 5 circumcised the eighth day; of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;
- 6 as to zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness that is in the law, blameless.
- 7 But everything that was a gain to me, I have considered to be a loss because of Christ.
- 8 More than that, I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of Him I have suffered the loss of all things and consider them filth, so that I may gain Christ
- 9 and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but one that is through faith in Christ—the righteousness from God based on faith.
- 10 [My goal] is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
- 11 assuming that I will somehow reach the resurrection from among the dead.
- 12 Not that I have already reached [the goal] or am already fully mature, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus.
- 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead,

Interpreting & Applying the Text

1. Paul gives us more insight into the occasion for the letter. Paul warns them about false teachers who are teaching a false gospel.

What are the descriptions of the false teachers (3:2) and what are the descriptions of the Philippians (3:3) (there are 3 of each)?

2. Paul uses his own story as an example of our tendency to put our confidence in the flesh. Paul lists his personal reasons in 3:4-6; what are some of the ways we put confidence in the flesh today?

3. There is a constant battle that we face between confidence in our flesh and confidence in Jesus. The false teachers of 3:2 are promoting confidence in the flesh. Why does Paul consider all of his reasons for confidence in the flesh to be **"loss"** (3:7) of **"filth"** (3:8)?

4. Jesus changes our story. How has Paul's goal in his life changed according to 3:10?

5. How has Jesus changed **your** story?

6. Paul says that he is still maturing and growing. He is making every effort to know Christ and be found in Him. Paul is forgetting what is behind (his confidence in the flesh) and reaching forward to what is ahead (confidence in Christ alone). How can you make "every effort" to know Christ and fully place our confidence in Him?

[**INTERACT**] [**With the Text**]

3:14 I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

- *Underline in blue everything Paul teaches about the "enemies of the cross."*
- *Underline in black everything that is true of a Christian.*

15 Therefore, all who are mature should think this way. And if you think differently about anything, God will reveal this to you also.

16 In any case, we should live up to whatever [truth] we have attained.

17 Join in imitating me, brothers, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us.

18 For I have often told you, and now say again with tears, that many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

19 Their end is destruction; their god is their stomach; their glory is in their shame. They are focused on earthly things,

20 but our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

21 He will transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of His glorious body, by the power that enables Him to subject everything to Himself.

Interpreting & Applying the Text

1. **"I pursue as my goal"** / "I am running hard toward the goal" – this is the same verb as "I make every effort" in 3:12 and "as to zeal" in 3:6. It speaks to a theme in this chapter of pursuing Christ above all.

What is **"the prize"** that Paul is pursuing?

2. In this case, it helps to look back to the earlier verses to understand **"the prize."** In 3:10 he summarized his goal as knowing Jesus, the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. That is to live life with Jesus and like Jesus in the power of Jesus. **Jesus is the prize!**

Guthrie says, **"the prize"** is the same as the great **"gain"** the apostle has already celebrated in this letter - that of knowing Christ, face-to-face, in glory. In short, the prize is the consummative moment of **"knowing Christ"** fully at the resurrection of the dead, which, for the apostle, is an all-consuming hope" (253).

What prizes do we tend to chase and pursue other than Jesus?

3. How is Jesus renewing your desire to pursue Him?

4. Paul draws a contrast between **"the enemies of the cross"** (3:18) and those who live like Jesus. Paul is returning to the warning he gave about false teachers in (3:2-3). How are the false teachers described?

5. As the false teachers focus on **"earthly things,"** what should be the focus of the Christian (3:19-20)?

6. One day **God Restores and Renews** all things, including our bodies as everything is put into subjection to Him. How does this hope impact your personal goals and daily priorities?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- *Circle the names in the text.*
- *Underline every command given in the text.*

- 4:1 So then, in this way, my dearly loved brothers, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.
- 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to agree in the Lord.
- 3 Yes, I also ask you, true partner, to help these women who have contended for the gospel at my side, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers whose names are in the book of life.
- 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
- 5 Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.
- 6 Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.
- 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- 8 Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is any praise—dwell on these things.
- 9 Do what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Interpreting & Applying the Text

1. **“So then”** / **“For this reason”** – points to the eternal and heavenly perspective of 3:20-21 as the basis for the commands and instructions to follow. Right theology is often connected to right living throughout the New Testament. Renewing our love for Jesus will renew our desire to change our actions to reflect Jesus.
How does the future return of Christ and the receiving of our glorious bodies (3:20-21) help us **“stand firm in the Lord”** (4:1)?
2. How do we **“rejoice in the Lord always”**? How is this different from everyday happiness?
3. How does Paul describe the **“peace of God”**? How do we experience it?
4. How do we live out the command in 4:8?
5. The Lord’s presence (nearness) is deeply connected to our peace. If the **God of peace** is near, then we can readily talk to Him about everything, we can trust that He is in control, and we can set our minds on Him! He is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely and commendable. If our great goal is to know Jesus (3:10), we must set our minds on Him.
How does knowing Jesus more renew our desire to live for Him?

[INTERACT]
With the Text

- *Put parentheses around everything you learn about the Philippians' generosity.*
- *Underline everything you learn about contentment.*

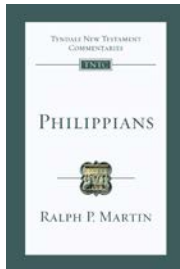
- 4:10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last you have renewed your care for me. You were, in fact, concerned about me, but lacked the opportunity [to show it].
- 11 I don't say this out of need, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.
- 11 I know both how to have a little, and I know how to have a lot. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret [of being content]-whether well-fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need.
- 13 I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me.
- 14 Still, you did well by sharing with me in my hardship.
- 11 And you, Philippians, know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone.
- 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent [gifts] for my need several times.
- 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that is increasing to your account.
- 18 But I have received everything in full, and I have an abundance. I am fully supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you provided—a fragrant offering, a welcome sacrifice, pleasing to God.
- 19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
- 20 Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.
- 21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. Those brothers who are with me greet you.
- 22 All the saints greet you, but especially those from Caesar's household.
- 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Interpreting & Applying the Text

1. What is the reason for Paul's rejoicing?
2. What do you learn about contentment in this passage? How does 4:13 connect to contentment?
3. How is the Bible's view of contentment different from the world's mindset?
4. The entire letter expresses Paul's thankfulness for their partnership in the Gospel. That thankfulness includes their financial contribution to the furtherance of Gospel. What do we learn about giving and generosity from 4:17?
5. 4:20 points us to the foundation and motivation of Christian generosity—***“the glory of God.”*** Sometimes we view our money and gifts as going to the church, an organization, or a ministry. This is a good reminder that we are giving to God for His glory. We give out of the abundance given to us in Jesus (4:19).
6. How does this passage renew your mindset about giving and generosity?

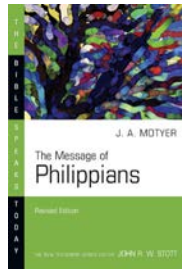
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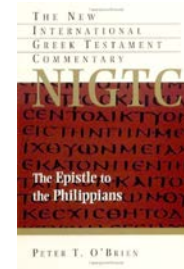
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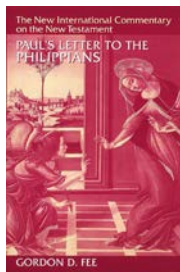
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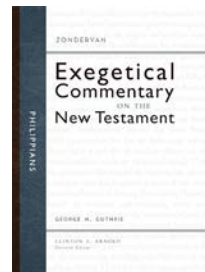
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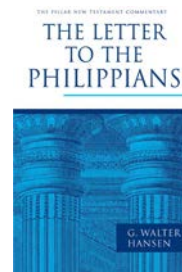
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