

PHILIPPIANS BIBLE STUDY

Philippians 1:1-11

Lesson #2 (b)

Introduction:

Recap last lesson and lay foundation for this weeks verses. Establish the context clearly.
Open with prayer and then read verses 1 - 11

verse 10:

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.

(HCSB)

A. Determining What Really Matters:

If someone asked you "what matters the most to you," what would your answer be? Would you say your health, your financial security, your freedom, your social status, your family? Surely these are all very important things. But are these the things that determine our eternal destiny? Are these the things that life is all about. Surely to most people they are indeed what life is all about, and everything they do is a relentless, perhaps even a ruthless pursuit of these things. And yet every man and woman knows that they can't take anything that they acquire in this life with them at the end of their days. Nevertheless, they go right on chasing after them anyway, eat drink and be merry today, for tomorrow we shall die!

The scriptures tell us that this is not God's desire for His beloved creatures. Even us reformed believers of God's sovereignty cannot deny that the scriptures plainly say that He desires that all men would be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Both the Old and New Testaments affirm His call to repentance and faith:

Old Testament Example

21 "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 22 "All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live. 23 "Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord GOD, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?"

Ezek 18:21-23 (NASB)

New Testament Example

1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority , so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity . 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

1 Tim 2:1-7 (NASB)

Therefore, what is the answer to the question Paul is asking about what really matters? He himself answers that question with the rest of the sentence that he wrote. Which is:

B. Being Pure and Blameless in the Day of Christ:

Being found pure and blameless in the day of Christ is simply being saved. Being washed in the blood of Jesus and found in Him, not having a righteousness of your own but that which is through faith in Christ Jesus. (Phil 3:9) Nothing in the universe is as important as this. This is the singular issue that affects the eternal destiny of every human being from Adam to whomever. And there is but one way to be pure and blameless on that day.

There are currently more religious systems in the world than we can count, but only one has been ordained by God. That statement will always cause offense to those who believe otherwise, but their objections simply do not alter the truth. It is God who justifies, and He does it on His own terms alone, whether we approve or not. Like the ice cream store, we want 31 flavors, but God offers only one, and it is Jesus Christ his Son. All those others may taste very good, but they simply cannot satisfy the requirements of God, the almighty and sovereign judge. Offensive or not, exclusive or not, politically correct or not, that is the singularly most important truth in the universe. Life is a one question test and the answer is Christ, all other answers are wrong. End of discussion says God! (Jn 14:6; Act 4:12) Exclusive - You bet it is, and God makes no bones about it. If we want **His forgiveness**, then we must obtain it **His way**, period. It isn't that this is hard to understand, but that it's hard to accept. It requires confessing our sins, humbling ourselves before an admittedly superior being, and changing our behaviors. It is this that we don't like as proud human beings. And it is this that keeps the majority of humanity at odds with their Creator. Pride, not ignorance is the barrier to most of mankind.

verse 11:

11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that [comes] through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (HCSB)

A. Filled With the Fruit of Righteousness That Comes Through Jesus Christ:

Being filled with the fruit of righteousness is similar to, but a little different than, being filled with righteousness itself. One is the source, the other is the natural product of that source. An inability, or perhaps an unwillingness to discern this simple distinction is the cause of very much controversy among various Christian factions. Those who oppose the term Lordship Salvation argue that submitting in obedience to the Laws of God is contrary to grace, and puts New Testament believers back under law for salvation. Those who embrace Lordship salvation say no, that's not what we're saying. We don't say that obedience is a necessary ingredient for salvation, but rather an indispensable fruit of salvation.

I suspect that those who hold the opposing view do so because their lives are not in compliance with the scriptures and they must either repent of their ways or refute the claims of scriptural lordship. However, there is no possible way to make the scriptures say that genuine believers do not bear the fruits of righteousness in their lives and behaviors. This is wishful thinking on the part of those who will not, or can not, bring their lives into conformity with the word of God. Jesus made it absolutely clear that true salvation produces true repentance and obedience, and an absence of these is an absence of conversion. (Mat 7:21-23) I do not believe that those who argue against lordship salvation are really ignorant of the distinction, but rather that they are desperate to justify their inability and lack of desire to keep His words out of genuine love which calls their claim of salvation into question.

No one who truly loves God objects to keeping His words. If you love me you will keep my words said Jesus. If keeping his words is offensive to you, then there is something very wrong with your love relationship with Jesus. If submitting to His will isn't part of your heartfelt relationship then you probably don't have a relationship at all. I understand this statement will anger some, but it is true. To love God and His Christ is to love being in obedient submission to Him.

If you do not love and desire all the things that Jesus said, then you don't love Him. You can't love Him and not His teachings. He himself is who and what He says. He is the word, and the word is Him. You either love both or you love neither, regardless of what you say or even think you feel. It's like the man who claims he loves his wife and then comes home and beats her up. Or like the woman who claims she loves her husband but as soon as he leaves the house she runs to meet her secret lover. Yet both of these if asked would adamantly declare that they love their spouse. It isn't what we say that authenticates our beliefs, it's what we do that reveals our hearts true desires. In this regard the statement is true that actions speak louder and truer than words alone. If behavior isn't an issue then anyone can claim anything they want with their mouth while living as they see fit in their own minds. But this won't pass muster with God. (Heb 4:12)

Who would deny that our own churches today are literally filled with nice people who say that they love Jesus, but live completely by their own feelings and opinions. If the scriptures teach something that contradicts their feelings or opinions then they immediately find a way to spin its meaning in such a way that they may continue in their way without apparent flagrant disobedience. And even worse, many pastors are guilty of the same thing, or at least knowingly tolerate it for the sake of church growth and attendance. When Jesus saw the flagrant misuse of the temple as a place of commerce did He tolerate it for the sake of temple attendance and synagogue growth? What was His response to the mishandling of things that are holy?

Let me say this plainly. If the desire of your heart is to be **free from** God's laws instead of being **conformed to** God's laws, then these laws **have not been written on your heart**, and you have never been saved and converted according to the New Covenant promises. (Jer 31:31-34; Eze 36:25-27) Again I will say this. Anyone whose heart's desire is to be made free from the obligations of God's holy laws instead of desperately desiring to be brought into willing conformity to them does not have them in their heart nor written in their minds. This is the very essence of the New Covenant relationship. **It is the establishment of the law**, embedded into the heart and written on the minds, not its termination. (Mat 5:17; Rm 2:13) This is the very theme of David's psalms, his love for the laws of God. But what does the New Testament say about the law?

17 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 18 "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven

Matt 5:17-20 (NASB)

12 For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; 13 for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. 14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, 16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

Romans 2:12-16 (NASB)

The fruits of righteousness consist, and are visibly displayed, in a life that is lived in conformity to the words of holy scripture, as spoken by Jesus Christ and the inspired prophets and apostles. Willing, joyful, and passionate submission to Jesus, and obedience to the laws of God is the very definition of the fruits of righteousness, born of regeneration. And thus it is through Jesus Christ that all righteousness both begins and flows toward God the Father. God's nature defines righteousness, so emulation of Him is what righteousness is, by its very definition. And, for the sake of those who object, this does not earn us our salvation, this authenticates it. A born again believer doesn't want to be under the law, as Paul taught the Galatians, but rather by the operation of the indwelling Spirit, he wants to be instinctively in conformity to the law, guided by an informed conscience, out of his love of God and his hunger and thirst for His righteousness. (Mat 5:6) This is a cause vs effect situation. There is only a problem when the two are reversed. ***(Discuss and explain this more)***

Yes, Christ is our mate and He is our friend. But first and foremost He is our King. Regardless of how loving and benevolent He may be, He is still absolutely sovereign in His power and authority over all, and our relationship with Him must begin right here at this juncture, His absolute unquestioned sovereignty. Unless this is clear there can be no further progress in the relationship. In fact, there cannot even be a relationship. We accept Him as our Lord, or we aren't really accepting Him at all, according to the teachings of scriptures. (Rm 10:9-10) Confession of Christ begins with our acknowledgment of His Lordship, which means His absolute sovereign authority over every aspect of our lives, our behaviors, and our affections. It is not enough just to believe that He is God's Son, but we must also believe and acknowledge that He is our King. This goes to the very heart of what "believing in Jesus" actually means.

To be our Savior He demands that He first be our Lord. This is not negotiable. It is severe, and demanding, and humbling, and narrow; and that is why so few ever really find it, let alone take that difficult path. (Mat 7:13-14) Furthermore standing right at that narrow gate are a whole host of false teachers passionately declaring that the narrow way is too legalistic and works oriented, and true salvation makes no demands other than a profession of faith. Oh how sad it is that so many fall victim to these deceivers, because when they find out they were tricked it will be too late to change, and they will hear those eternally damning words "I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness." (Mat 7:23)

These are not words spoken to the rebellious masses of atheists who deny God, but to the multitudes of churchgoers who claimed the name of Jesus, but then denied their responsibility to obey His teachings with their actions; and called those who do legalists. These are the radical grace hopefuls, the let go and let God bunch, who think and hope that somehow, someday, God is just going to make everything work out in their lives, when they themselves are still living comfortably in the treasures of the world and the pleasures of the moment. They say "Peace and safety" is theirs, but sudden destruction looms precariously over their heads every moment. And only when it's too late will they know for sure that they were deceived, though I suspect that most will have had at least some suspicions, if they've ever read the bible themselves.

But many rely on their personal feelings, and the shallow teachings of Sardinian and Laodicean churches, that focus on making them feel good about themselves while they're living in deception. But do not be deceived beloved, God is not mocked, whatever a person sows thus will they reap in due season. (Gal 6:7-8)

B. That Comes Through Jesus Christ:

Being filled with the fruit of righteousness, as is being discussed in this verse, is the demonstration of having died to the old self and having been born again to a new resurrected life that is clearly in conformity to Christ. As the verse further states "that comes through Jesus Christ." This verse is saying that our lives will bear fruit just as Christ's life did **if** we are indeed reborn and indwelt with His life in us. The only ones who argue for the abolishment of the law and obedience to the scriptures as the guiding principles of our lives is those who don't have it written in their hearts. Can you even imagine David praying "Oh God, if you would just abolish your oppressive and burdensome Laws." If Christ lives within, then **His love** of God's righteousness will be **your love** for God's righteousness, not an animosity towards it. Of course we also argue that keeping the law for an unbeliever, or even a believer, is not the **way to salvation**, that's obvious. But that's not at all the issue we're discussing here is it? There are those who just love to confuse that issue.

We're discussing the establishment of the law in the hearts and minds of every born again believer as was the **explicit essence of the new covenant promise**. That new covenant promise provides the means which mankind never had within himself to fulfill the law; not the authorization by God to now disregard it under the banner of grace. (Mat 5:17) That's not the definition of biblical grace. **Biblical grace produces repentance without exception:**

18 When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life." (Act 11:18)

4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom 2:4)

The narrow and difficult road to eternal life is the road of repentance and sanctification, demonstrated by righteous obedience to the word of God. There is no other road that goes there, regardless of what you might be told by false teachers. Every good tree produces good fruit says the word, and that good fruit is righteous obedience to the word of God performed joyfully from the new regenerated heart. This is grace according to the bible. Biblical grace produces righteousness; it doesn't release us from it as many are teaching.

All of the objections and accusations of the libertines and liberals towards those who acknowledge the theological certainty of Lordship salvation are used as a self-defense mechanism by those who know they don't love the law of God, and know it isn't written in their hearts; but they don't want to have to come to terms with what that indicates regarding their own salvation. Sometimes the clever one's will say that they do love it, but they just don't want to have to do it. What is that supposed to mean? If Lordship salvation is true, then the imposters have no place to hide and they know it, so they must argue that it simply isn't true, or that they don't understand it, or that we misunderstand it, regardless of how clearly and repeatedly it's presented in the scriptures.

If the new covenant promise made by God is to place the love of His laws into the hearts and minds of His believers, then isn't it simple enough for everyone to know if they've received that gift? If you have then you love and cherish the laws of God and seek to observe them just as David did, but if you don't then there are essentially only two options available:

One is that God doesn't really keep His promises to all of His believers, and that's why you don't love His laws. Or secondly, you just simply haven't ever receive it, and are self deceived. There really aren't any other choices. A life that exhibits the fruits of righteousness is the inevitable outcome of a regenerated heart, and objecting to being in submission to the laws of God is a sure sign that the heart has not been regenerated and transformed. There is no such thing as a good and fruitless tree according to the word of God. (Jn 15:1-6)

We have recently heard a popular teaching from John 15 about the bearing of fruit in the life of believers, and were taught that there were genuine believers that bear no fruit. That is in direct contradiction to the very verses being taught that declare that every branch that doesn't bear fruit is cut off and thrown into the fire. As humans we want to make exceptions and soften the terms, but Christ made none whatever. Every good tree bears good fruit, or it isn't good. (Mat 7:17-19) To put the metaphor in plain words, every born again believer begins to take on the attributes of Jesus Christ because he is indwelt by His Spirit, and is thus compelled by his new heart to do so. This does not happen to some and not to others. The **gifts** of the Spirit do indeed differ from one to another (Eph 4:11-12) but the **fruits** of the Spirit, clearly seen as righteousness in the lives of the believers, defines the tree and authenticates the species.

As has been said a million times, no one can get themselves saved, or can keep himself saved solely by trying to keep the laws of God, but, everyone **who is saved** loves and cherishes the law even as David did, because it has been written in their hearts by the new covenant promise of God, through the obedient work of Jesus Christ. (Jer 31, Eze 36, Lk 22:20)

This is the very essence of this verse in Philippians chapter one. Being filled with the righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ is the inevitable and inescapable living out of the life of Christ, because He truly lives within and is doing a progressive work of sanctification in every genuine believer, which is seen as being filled with the fruit of righteousness. It isn't a product of our own self determination, but a product of being truly indwelt by the living Spirit of Jesus Christ within our new reborn spirit, and His life always bears fruit, without exception.

CONCLUSION:

Now, while everything we've been discussing thus far thoroughly and intimately involves us, and our affections, and our behaviors, nevertheless it really isn't primarily about us at all, as this verse goes on to teach. All of this is ultimately for the first, foremost, and primary goal of **demonstrating the glory of God** the Father, by the visible example of His work in His elect children, playing itself out as He sovereignly predetermined, in full view of all His angels, all His authorities, and all mankind. We will begin our discussion of this central biblical theme next week.

Amen

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