

GRACE AND GLORY

(Philippians 4:20-23)

Series: "Philippians: The Joyful Letter" (Part 27)

...Often in the conclusion of a great work in the arts, music or literature, the focus is not upon the details of the previous work, but rather focuses upon the great overarching theme of the entire work.

...Paul is no different; as he concluded the writing of his letter to the Philippians his final emphasis is upon the grand overarching themes of the letter. He ended his letter in a big way by giving glory (Doxology) to God the Father and to the Lord Jesus Christ Who is the source of grace.

TWO THEMES FORMING PAUL'S CLOSING DOXOLOGY... THAT BLESS AND SURELY WARM OUR HEARTS NOW AND FOREVER.

...This doxology is interspersed with a few brief words of greeting. Four groups are identified...

I. Glory To God: We Are Reminded To Whom All Glory Is Due. (v.20)

...This little prayer reminds us that God is the rightful One worthy to receive the glory, not us...

A. What is the glory of God mentioned in verse 20?

1. The word is the same in verse 19, but there it refers to God's glory meaning His character. God's glory is the outward expression of Who He is.

...God would meet our needs according to His glory: His power, His love, etc.

2. The same word appears in verse 20, but in verse 20 the glory is given to God. Here he meant that we should praise Him. To glorify Him is to praise Him!

...He is really looking forward to the day when God will be praised and honored as He should and must be forever.

B. There is a picture of this in Revelation 4-5 of how this will happen. In chapter 4 the heavens open up, and John gets a glimpse of heaven. What does he see? God is on the throne and the description of what he sees is meant to convey a sense of God's glory and of the glory given to Him by the redeemed creation.

1. God is praised as the author and agent of redemption. (Symbolized by the sea of glass)

...Thanks to God's great work of redemption, cleansing from sin is no longer needed. (v.4:8)

2. God is praised for His kingship. He is praised as "The Lion of the tribe of Judah."

...The elders sing to the King, "You are worthy...to receive glory and honor..." (v.4:11)

3. God is praised for His ownership of all creation. (v.5:1ff) Jesus opened the scroll; this scroll symbolized the title deed of the universe. Only He is worthy to do so...

C. When Paul closed his "Joyful Letter," he was looking forward to the day when God will be praised in this way, when all honor will be given to the Lord Jesus Christ. In this he sums up...

II. Grace Be With You: The Entire Message Of Christianity is Grace. (v.23)

...God's grace...there is nothing more significant that Paul could have used to end his letter.

A. God's grace is His unmerited favor to human beings. Do we deserve anything from God?

1. Do we deserve life and happiness from Him? No! We have run from Him even after...

2. Yet, when we were far from Him, in His grace, He came to us dying for our sin...

...He loves us and will love us forever. That's Grace!

B. Not only is grace mentioned here, but he also mentioned the Lord Jesus Christ. This is significant as Jesus is the source of grace. It comes to us only through Him.

...Jesus' name is mentioned 40 times in this brief letter. (Once every two-three verses)

...Look back and notice again what Philippians told us about the King. It's all about Jesus:

1. The book began describing Paul and his associates as "bond servants of Jesus Christ."
 2. He addresses the Philippians as "Saints in Jesus Christ." (v.1:1)
 3. Paul views his imprisonment as "Bonds in Christ." He rejoices that Christ is...(v.1:18)
 4. Paul describes his whole life as being full of Jesus Christ. "For me to live is..."(v.1:21)
 5. Life is to be selfless as we have the mindset of Christ...(vv.2:1-11)
 6. He told of the believer's joy, "We rejoice in Christ Jesus...rejoice in the Lord always"
 7. He bids believers "To stand fast (firm) in the Lord." "Be of one mind in the Lord."
 8. He told us that God will supply all of our needs in Christ Jesus..." (v.4:19)
- C. As we consider all that Jesus is, it ought to warm our hearts thinking of His preeminence, honor and the glory that is His. He is our life, our hope, our prayer, our song, and our joy.

SO WHAT? WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN YOUR LIFE?

1. Since God is the One to Whom we owe everything: our life, our families, our abilities, our salvation, our future...we ought to fill our words and songs with praise to Him. Since we will do this throughout eternity, we might as well begin to practice today. How often during a typical day do you find yourself giving glory to God? Today, determine in your heart to speak and speak often words of praise to Him.
2. Do you feel in your heart that God owes you? If so, you have not really come to understand your need of His grace. Being born a rebel and an enemy of God, due to our sin, we deserve God's wrath. But "God who is rich in mercy," provided for us a Savior Jesus Christ the Lord. God sent His own Son, Jesus, to the Cross, to die a sinner's death and in that provide the only way of escape. Those who receive Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord are forgiven of all sins (past, present and future) and receive the gift of salvation. It is all of GRACE. It is God's gift to undeserving men and women.
3. If you know Jesus as Lord, then your life too, from beginning to end ought to be all about Jesus. In your heart and on your lips, Paul's words ought to be yours as well..."For me to live is Christ..." "For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:36)
4. Today come by simple child-like faith to own Jesus as your Savior and Lord. Is God calling you to turn from sin and run to the Cross?

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How was our study in the book of Philippians life changing for you? In what ways did Paul's "Joyful Letter" convict you the most? What was most helpful?
2. Can you describe using your own words what it means "To live is Christ?" What does this actually look like in your life?
3. Why is God's grace so wonderful?
4. How did you give God glory today?