

/// An Odor of Sweet Smell

Philippians 4:13 – 23

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~ Our Spiritual Safari through the extremely important epistle of Philippians ends with this report. We must say goodbye to an innocent, yet imprisoned Paul, and we will turn back time and Scripture to the palace of King Solomon with all his wealth, worldly observations, and earthly wisdom in the Book of Ecclesiastes in our next report. Although I have tried my best to bring out all of the most important spiritual truths here in Philippians, I recognize I have totally failed in that regard; I realize I have also failed to adequately bring forth the truths that we did cover in this epistle. I have done my absolute best, though; the Lord knows that. The problem is: my best is insufficient.

Alright, we first gained the philosophy for Christian living in chapter one. Paul said, “... *for to me to live is Christ; and to die is gain.*” Can you honestly say that’s your life philosophy today? I don’t mean something that you agree to because you think voting for it is a good idea. No, I mean to ask you: is this something that has brought you to the highest plane of living available to you on this earth; irrespective of your present circumstances? That just happens to be what “*pressing on to the mark*” means, my friends. I don’t think very many of us truly understand that.

We saw the *pattern* for Christian living in chapter two, where we all got into the mind of Christ. That’s a mind of humility and humbleness; and, just as Jesus took the place of a servant down here, we are commanded to esteem others better than ourselves. There’s not much living-out of that principle in the church today. Only the Spirit of God can produce these fruits in our lives. Chapter three brought us the *prize* for Christian living and the Personal high-calling of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must keep in mind, however, many are called, but few are chosen. Chapter four brings us the all-important *power* for Christian living; and if you haven’t read *all* of our safari reports in Philippians, I suggest you go back and do so now.

The one and only strength Christians have is joy; and true joy is only available in the Lord. The secret to unleashing the power of the Holy Spirit is proper prayer, and joyful obedience to God. The sanctuary of power is where we can get alone with our Holy High Priest – and make our confessions of sin to Him – and open our hearts and, being cleansed and washed in our heart and mind, we can go on to true fellowship with God our Father — and walk in the light — as we meditate on Scripture and apply it to our lives. That's the place where so many people desperately need to go today; because that is where satisfaction in the power of God resides.

Men and women alike are naturally power-hungry today; and if they obtain power, they become drunken narcissists. The natural man naturally desires to be in a position of power and authority. Well, power is a dangerous thing; and, regarding a parallel, mankind has unlocked some of the secrets to physical power today — but hasn't even come close to discovering the powers locked in the universe. This reveals exactly how dangerous man has become — and will grow increasingly so. Antichrist will be the most dangerous individual the world has ever experienced ruling them; although we must get to a one world ruler for that prophecy to come to pass, and it will almost certainly involve a man sitting at a desk with a button he taps that melts the earth with a fervent heat, as Peter prophesied....

13 I can do all things in Christ which strengtheneth me.

~ Consider verse thirteen in the context of God's will for your life; which is to glorify His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever God commands us to do, He supplies the ways, power, and means to accomplish it. If you think you have a gift, God will give you everything necessary in order to exercise your gift. A gift is a manifestation of the Spirit of God in the life of a believer. In order for our gifts to be fully revealed and utilized by God, we must have power; and that power only comes from functioning in the body of Christ — and from the Holy Spirit working through us. We can do all things in and through Christ's plan and purpose for our lives. Consider a train on the tracks. That train can do everything it is designed to do, as long as it is on the track. Our track is Christ. If we get off of our track as Christians, we become a wreck. That's very important to understand properly, correctly and completely....

14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

~ Some of the seemingly sweetest people in the community are psychological malefactors. They are usually self-professing believers; but they are the biggest hypocrites in the world. What we all need is the reality of coming to the Lord Jesus Christ and doing things His way in our lives for a change. We need to get off of the gimmicks, and off of the fractured, disconnected methods for sainthood, and stop playing church – which is all repulsive to the Lord – and we need to get into a serious study of His Word. Not just the Gospel of John or Matthew – which are both wonderful – but so are all sixty-six books of the Bible; because each has a significant, individualized message.

We need the *total* Word of God if we want to experience the total will of God in this life. The Bible provides the complete basis on which we are to operate in the world. Loving the Scriptures and desiring to understand them brings a joy, a satisfaction – and sheer delight – when we find ourselves in the direct will of God; and when we work to the point where we are doing what He wants us to do within the body of Christ. All of that is attained only as the result of growing in the grace and knowledge of Him through Holy Writ. I don't care how many church services you conduct, Bible studies you attend, street corners on which you preach, people you pigeon-hole for Jesus, or songs you sing in unison – if you do not find yourself in the direct will of God while claiming to do His work, then your work may last for a season of your life – but it will not last forever – which means it is not eternal! We might want to think about that very, very carefully....

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

(To the Philippians written from Rome, by Epaphroditus)

~ So, as our Spiritual Safari says farewell for now to the apostle Paul, the Spirit of God asks us: how much time do we really spend in a sincere, educated, systematic, daily, Spirit-led, Spirit-filled, proper, correct and complete Bible study seeking the Lord Jesus Christ on every page of the Word of God? The answer to that question is the determination of whether or not you are in the direct will of God for your life! It's so simple that I cannot charge you dear readers a fair safari fee. I cannot create a gimmick that will motivate you. Those who make it gimmicky, tolled and mysterious are not of God. God Himself, however, does make it just as complicated as it is simple for us because He becomes very personal in our lives. All I can do is guide you through the Word of God. If you are praying for wisdom, judgment and spiritual discernment, and then reading the text from Scripture regarding these reports — and then reading these reports — and then reading the text from the Bible again – then I can promise you two things: (1) you will not agree with me on everything. I am the only person in this world with which I totally agree and (2) the Holy Spirit will lead you into all knowledge and understanding of Holy Writ. I hope to see you in

Ecclesiastes; one of the most misunderstood books in the canons of
Scripture ~

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