

### **LESSON 3: PHILIPPIANS 1:19-2:11**

#### **Advancing the Gospel – Through Paul! (cont'd)**

1. Paul expects to be delivered from prison (vv. 22-27; see also 2:24). Through what two appointed agencies of God will deliverance come (v. 19)? How might these two be related? Is Paul suggesting that the sufficient supply of the Holy Spirit to meet his need depends directly on the prayers of the Philippians, and that failing their prayers, the supply of the Holy Spirit will dry up?
2. On a related note, Paul enjoins his friends to pray for him so that he will grow spiritually through the trials of his imprisonment (v. 19). Do you have an obligation to put another's spiritual growth at the forefront of your prayers, and to take that obligation seriously? How involved then and valued are human beings – you in particular – in the work of God?
3. In the next verses, Paul shares with us his great dilemma. What is his “eager expectation and hope,” even his greatest ambition (v. 20)? What do you think Paul means when he writes of his hope that “Christ will be honored in my body”? Do you desire that all the dimensions of God's greatness will be exhibited in your life? Is there a prayer request in all of this that God would be more than willing to grant if asked?
4. What is Paul's whole purpose in life (v. 21)? What would Paul have to “gain” by his death? Just his heavenly reward? What else will be promoted by his death? What will be promoted by your death?
5. For whose benefit do you live (vv. 22-24): your own, or to fulfill God's will in your life? What is God's will for your life?
6. For what purpose is Paul “convinced” that it is necessary for him to “remain in the flesh” (vv. 24-25)? If God allows him to again visit the Philippians, what will that trip demonstrate? How will they respond to their prayers being answered by his return (v. 26)? How do you respond to God when your prayers are answered?

## **Advancing the Gospel – Through the Philippians**

1. What characteristic of the life worthy of the gospel of Christ is being emphasized by Paul (v. 27)? If unity in the spirit is not present in a congregation, can any of the other marks of the true church (such as love, peace, purity, steadfastness, etc.) be present or practiced as Christ requires? How exclusive and absolute, and how much of an inescapable obligation, is the requirement to live a life worthy of the gospel?
  
2. The witness of the Church calls for strenuous endeavor and united effort (v. 27). What kind of hard work is required? But, what will such “contending for the gospel” elicit (v. 28)? How will the Philippians know they are on the right path as they actively witness in behalf of the gospel?
  
3. How did Paul view the suffering that came to him for advancing the gospel (vv. 12, 30)? Can it be that the suffering “granted to you” for advancing the gospel (v. 29) can be a privilege? See also 3:10; Acts 5:41)?
  
4. What are the inner attitudes of the Christian with which Paul is preoccupied? His vision for unity includes what in each believer? How then are 2:3-4 implicit in 2:2? What is your individual responsibility for promoting Christian unity?
  
5. Christ Jesus was “in very nature God” (2:6). How great then the contrast with (v. 7)! How great the deprivation, the lessening of himself, the forsaking of what he had before? What is the significance of this, for you? Into what did the Son empty himself (v. 7-8a; see also Isaiah 53:12)? How unimaginable for the Christ to bring all of his divine nature undiminished into a new unimaginable state? How can the constant remembrance of this fact do anything but bring you to your knees in thanksgiving and worship?
  
6. How did God respond to the decision of the Son (vv. 5-9)? What is the visual demonstration of the Father’s estimate of the Son? What is the value judgment of the Father about his Son? What is it about the Son that causes the Father to lift him to the highest heaven?
  
7. To what end is all of this leading (v. 10)? What will it be like when the King comes at the end? Will all be saved? Will there be additional opportunities? In what ways will nonbelievers be surprised? Believers?