

## To Live Is Christ | “Strengthened By Jesus & Each Other”

### Philippians 4:10-20

#### I. Reading of the Text

*I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. [11] Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. [12] I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. [13] I can do all things through him who strengthens me. [14] Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. [15] And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. [16] Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. [17] Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. [18] I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. [19] And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. [20] To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

#### II. Introduction — Sentiment or Reality?

A. Philippians 4:13: *“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”*

B. A sentimental slogan or a testimony of being guided by divine power?

#### III. Skillful Living in this World (vs. 11-13) [*vs. 10: thankful for their concern*]

*Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. [12] I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. [13] I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*

A. “Learned”; “I know how” — an acquired skill

1. Prosperity Theology: "I'm not brought low anymore." (Fruit: People totally us equipped for the hard knocks and demonic warfare of this life.)
  2. Gospel: "I know how to be brought low, and abound in Jesus." (Fruit: speaks for itself)
- B. Extent of his learning — Hunger & plenty; abundance & need
- C. Implication: The Christian Faith is more than believing the right thing; its the learning of Jesus' skills and walking in them by depending on him.
1. Life can be unpredictable and hard — even for believers.
  2. The Christian faith is also a way of life that must be learned.
  3. Contentment is the skill to be acquired by all believers.
  4. Jesus gives us the strength to live contented lives.
- D. Many of us must learn contentment with abundance.
1. We are being shaped by a society whose creed is, "I need that."
  2. Rankin Wilbourne, in his book, *Union with Christ*:
    - a) Depression is the most diagnosed mental disorder in the world;
    - b) Largely due to society's expectation on each of us to be successful;
    - c) Having more choices leads to greater discontentment;
    - d) More choices do not equal more happiness;
    - e) Increased choices have led to increased expectations of how good a choice should be, leading to increased dissatisfaction;
    - f) Pitting the imagined possibilities of what you don't have against the real limitations of what you do, it eventually leads to dissatisfaction with whatever *or whomever* you choose.
- E. The secret? Union with Christ...**possessing Jesus**
- "...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead." - Philippians 3:10-11*

1. J-Curve [slides]
2. Not easy
  - a) Question: Will we medicate/suppress our pain or will we meet with Jesus there?
  - b) This is not easy — it necessarily means that to heal, we must face the parts of our lives that give us the most shame...the places that fuel destructive behavior and emotional disarray.
  - c) But remember, you are in GRACE!

#### IV. Strength in Community (vs. 14-20)

- A. Most people fail to read verses 13 & 14 together — *“I can do all things through him who strengthens me. [14] Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.”*
  1. Paul wasn’t saying that being able to do all things in Christ’s strength was the same as having no need for other believers to encourage and support him.
  2. He wasn’t promoting spiritual independence.
  3. Paul needed God’s people despite his spiritual maturity.
- B. Midweek — Discover union and contentment with Jesus in a community of friendship and support
  1. We’re going to spend 14-weeks talking through our union with Christ
  2. Change of location — Believing Church on Poplar and Perkins
  3. 7:00—8:15
  4. No condemnation if you can’t make it
  5. Why?
    - a) More teaching;
    - b) Childcare from nursery to high school
    - c) A better fit for some people
  6. Community Groups are not being replaced — another way to connect

7. Youth will continue to meet at Missio Dei through August 10

**V. Conclusion**

- A. Jesus gives us strength for a life of rich contentment.
- B. This strength is found in facing our pain with Jesus.
- C. And this strength is found in meeting with Jesus together.