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## Salvation In Philippians. (2013)

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## Salvation in Philippians.

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**INTRODUCTION:** since the primary focus of this study is upon Scriptures (in most chapters in Philippians) that relate to salvation and are relevant to eternal life there are far too many different topics and titles to make a topics list, but I have faith that most who travel through each chapter will by the time they arrive at the end not only be enriched in their knowledge of salvation, but also enriched in God's love and god's grace in Christ.

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### Philippians 1

#### Being Pure and Blameless.

Philip. 1:9-11 ----- <sup>9</sup>And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment <sup>10</sup>so that you may approve what is excellent and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup>filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Paul by praying that love would abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment (v9) is shining a spotlight upon the importance of love and that the purpose of knowledge and discernment in this context is to increase in love. Biblical knowledge without being clothed in love (grace, mercy, compassion, kindness and forgiveness) is left cold and harsh, legalistic and dogmatic. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians stated this same principle in the following powerful words: -

- If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal and if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. Even if I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing (1 Cor. 13:1-3).

This clearly shows that in God's hierarchy of the things most important to His heart love is at the top of the list.

**Knowledge and discernment:** the purpose of knowledge and discernment in this context is so that we might know what is the right and loving thing to do in any given situation and circumstance.

**Be pure and blameless:** does not mean be without sin if it was possible for anyone of us to achieve this glorious state while in this mortal and fallen body then Christ died for no purpose. Rather the words, "Be pure and blameless," mean live a lifestyle that honours God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It means, forsake those things that are against God's will and behaviour that could be harmful to another human physically, financially, sexually, emotionally, mentally or spiritually and instead of being led by the flesh (i.e., self, ego, pride, lust and greed) be filled with the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, patience, grace, mercy and such like things).

To be pure and blameless also embraces the idea that we trust solely in our faith in Christ and God's grace for our righteousness contrasted to trusting in self-effort and adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions we may follow and crowning our biblical knowledge in the royal robes of love contrasted to being harsh, dogmatic and legalistic. It is doing as much as is in our power to maintain the unity of the faith in contrast to causing divisions, arguments, contentions and strife. It means confessing our sin before the Lord, repenting when we have offended God or hurt another person especially a brother or sister in the Lord and putting things right were possible when a wrong has been done.

**Be filled with the fruit of righteousness:** means be filled with love as recorded in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, it is about being filled with faithfulness, patience, goodness, kindness, self-control, wishing the best for others and being thrilled and

excited for people when they are greatly blessed, it is being humble, courteous, giving, gentle, unassuming, modest and hating injustice (i.e., people being treated unfairly) (1 Cor. 13:4-6) (Gal. 5:22-26). Acts of righteousness refer to anything we do that is clothed in the fruits of righteousness and can be summed up with the words, good conduct and good deeds.

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### **To Live is Christ, and to Die is Gain.**

Philip. 1:21-24 ----- <sup>21</sup>For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup>If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup>I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. <sup>24</sup>But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.

This is not only a stunning insight into Paul's faith, but also shows to what glorious heights the love of Christ can transcend the human heart and to how high it lifts the mind and passions of those who experience it above the things of this world. To Paul death was gain this is the heavenly place to where the breath-taking love of Christ had lifted him.

Throughout my early Christian life I often saw brothers and sisters seeking the magic keys to become more spiritual (myself being one of them), but it is interesting to notice that when Paul talks about those in Christ being more spiritual he has the following two things in focus: -

1. Walking in the Spirit contrasted to walking in the flesh, meaning living a lifestyle of love (i.e., showing compassion kindness, grace and mercy to others etc.) contrasted to living for self and to satisfy the flesh (i.e., our ego, pride and greed).
2. Increasing in the love of Christ that is so gloriously deep and fulfilling to the heart and mind that it transcends the person who is filled with it far beyond the attachments of this world and the pleasures it offers. In fact this love that is found in Christ is so overwhelmingly majestic those who possess it are willing to lay down their lives for it. Paul was so overwhelmed by this love that he saw, death as actual gain.

**To be with Christ is far better, but to remain is more necessary:** Paul's words, yet which I shall choose I cannot tell (v22) show that the both the love of Christ and the glorious eternal hope was so awe-inspiring to Paul that he was mentally and emotionally torn between whether he would chose to live or die (should he be given a choice). He knew his ministry was of great benefit to those he served, but his love to be eternally and literally with Christ was equally as deep thus he makes the statement (if he had the choice) he does not know whether he would chose to live and serve or die and be with the Lord. The love of Christ has taken root so deeply in Paul that while here on this earth all his joy comes from serving the Lord.

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### **Philippians 2.**

#### **Have the same Mind and Love and be in Full Accord with Another.**

Philip. 2:1-2 ----- <sup>1</sup>So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, <sup>2</sup>complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

Paul is encouraging those in Christ: -

1. To have the same mind.
2. To have the same love.
3. To be in full accord with each other.

**Having the same mind:** having one mind is in the context of love and having the same attitude, to be of one mind in this context does not mean that every brother and sister in Christ must dogmatically believe every detail of the Bible in the exact same manner. Having one mind is about accepting into the global family of Christ whoever: -

- Has come to Christ through honest repentance and baptism
- Believes that Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose to the right hand side of his heavenly Father in heaven
- Knows that it is only by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace that they are counted as righteous by God
- Is fully aware that they cannot be saved by their own self-effort or by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.
- Loves the Lord and desires to honour God and the name of Jesus.
- Believes the Lord will return in glory and that the dead in Christ will be resurrected and those who are alive will be raised to be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air to be forever with the Lord in everlasting glory (1 (Thess. 4:14-18).

Being of one mind is about being united on these foundational things and accepting that despite other difference if these things are the foundation and passion of anyone who faithfully follows the Lord Jesus Christ they are in the Kingdom of God and are a brother or sister in the family of Christ.

**Have the same love:** having the same love means being filled with the fruits of the spirit (i.e., compassion, kindness, grace, forgiveness, patience mercy and such like things). It embraces the idea of being empathetic and doing as much as we can that is in our power to encourage, support and strengthen others in the family of Christ. Having the same love is understanding that in the global family of Christ there will be brothers and sisters acting as infants in Christ who can still only be fed on milk (Scriptures that teach right behaviour) and not solid food (Scriptures that teach revelations and prophecies etc.,) because they are not only still being merely human, but are also behaving in a human manner? (1 Cor. 3:1-4), but that does not mean that they are excluded from the eternal Kingdom of God, but it may mean that they will suffer loss since Paul states: -

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, but if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw their work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done and if it survives, they will receive a reward, but if it is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:10-15).

Having the same love is about understanding this principal and rather than judging and condemning brothers and sisters who maybe acting in a human manner we imitate Paul who with love and compassion did all he could to help the brothers and sisters who were still behaving in a human manner from suffering loss when Christ returns.

**Being in full accord:** the word accord from Strong's Concordance means to be similar in spirit and sentiment, meaning, similar in opinion, emotion, feeling, judgement and attitude and thought it implies a companionship of like-mindedness with a resemblance in possessions, hobbies and enjoyment. When Paul said, "Be in full accord and of one mind," he was not saying that we all have to be clones of each other, but rather that we are similar in spirit and judgment, meaning that our mindset should be one of showing patience, grace and forgiveness toward each other in contrast to being jealous and envious. Being in full accord carries the idea that we understand that many brothers and sisters in the global family of Christ come from different cultural backgrounds and have different levels of education (especially concerning religion).

It is about understanding that many are battling to overcome various past habits or deep emotional hurts while some are struggling to support their families and others are coping with persecutions or the emotional hurts of divorce and broken families and such like things. Being in full accord is about setting our minds to work together in a kindred spirit to encourage, support and strengthen each other in the faith understanding that not one of us stands perfect before the Lord and that each faithful brother and sister in the family of Christ has their own particular troubles to cope with.

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### **Christ Made Himself Nothing, Taking the Form of a Servant.**

Philip. 2:3-8 ----- <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup>Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup>but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Having the same mind carries the idea of doing nothing in the Lord from a spirit of competition (i.e., as though competing against another brother and sisters for recognition, status or position) or from self-conceit or for self-glory, but rather do all things from an attitude of humility counting others as being of great value to God and rejoicing when we see others succeeding and growing in the faith. This is what Paul means when he says: -

- Count others as more or significant than yourself (v3).
- Do not look only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others (v4).

Esteeming others better than yourself means encourage and build others up in contrast to spending all our effort and time on establishing our own dreams and goals, but that does not mean lay aside whatever work God has called us to, but rather don't use others as merchandise to achieve them. Esteeming others better than yourself, is about knowing that God does not love or value a person who has a great talent or is enormously gifted over and above those who may lack such talents and skills, it is about esteeming everyone as equals and supporting and caring about each other.

**Have this mind among yourselves:** (v5) this statement of Paul's means whether we are a president of a nation or the head of a world-wide church never allow the destructive power of pride and ego to exalt us above others or allow the deceptive, silent and seductive voices of pride and ego deceive our minds into thinking we are superior and that others are less. The words, "Which is yours in Christ Jesus" (v5) means this is the type of mind that Christ had, he was the beloved Son of God, the most exalted of all who has ever walked on this earth, yet rather than exalt himself as the royal and majestic King that he was, he instead took on the form of a humble servant riding into the city of God on a donkey and laying aside the joys of this world to serve others.

**Being equal with God:** The following words of Paul: -

- Though Christ was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped (thought it not robbery to be equal with God) (in the KJV) (v6)

Are used by some religious teachers to support the theory that Jesus is God, but this is a gross misunderstanding of what Paul is saying. The entire context on both sides of this verse is humility. Paul is not implying that Jesus is God, but that though he was the perfect image of God, meaning God's Spirit dwelt within him without limitation and he manifested God's power and his character of love in absolute perfection. Paul statement, "Jesus did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped," means that even though Jesus would have been fully justified in considering himself equal with God he never did, but instead made himself nothing

by taking on the form of a servant (v7). Following is an earthy example (howbeit limited) it is very much like an earthly father who owns a multi-billion dollar global oil industry giving all his authority and power to his son to run the business. The son has equal power and authority as his father had and all those who the son has authority over would be right in considering the son equal with the father in power and authority and even the son himself would be justified to see himself in this manner, but no-one would ever think that this meant the son was the father so it begs the question, "Why do some religious ministers teach that Jesus the Son is actually God the Father?"

**NOTE:** Christ's great humbleness and servant spirit even to death was one of the reasons God, seated him at his right hand in heavenly places, far above all rule authority, power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come and put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church (Ephes. 1:20-23) (Col. 2:10).

**Christ was born in the likeness of men and found in human form (v7)** some religious teachers use these words to support the mistaken theory that Jesus pre-existed with God before time began, but this is reading far more into the verse than it is actually saying. Paul is simply highlighting the awe-inspiring glory and the overwhelming wonder of the following Bible prophecies that speak of the coming of the promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15) who will conquer all evil, of the promised seed of Abraham who will inherit the world, of the promised seed of David who will be an everlasting King over the world and of the many prophecies that speak of the coming Messiah, the Christ and Saviour of the world. Paul is shining a floodlight on the truth that Jesus who humbly arrived on earth born of a woman and born as a human man is the promised seed and the promised Son the eternal King and Messiah the Christ and Saviour of the world.

**NOTE:** Christ was certainly in the eternal mind of God the Father before the foundations of the world began and also the majestic, glorious eternal and central focus of God's stunning and humbling foreordained plan of salvation for all mankind. Much like a building is in the mind of an architect long before it is constructed. The architect plans the entire structure in his mind, he sees every detail of it in vivid clarity long before the builders begin to construct it and long before the workers even set foot on the site where it is to be built.

An excited expectant mother plans in her mind her baby's room long before the baby is born, she not only sees in her mind the design and colours of that room, but also the lighting, furniture and clothing long before the child is born. In the same manner God planned and purposed in his timeless mind that Christ would be the central focus of His sovereign plan for mankind's eternal salvation long before Jesus came into the world.

**Words of comfort and encouragement:** since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states: -

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim: -

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

**For further information see the title: -**

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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### **God Gave Jesus a Name above Every Name.**

Philip. 2:9-11 ----- <sup>9</sup>Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Though Christ was humbled and appeared in the form of a servant God has now raised him up to the throne of glory and to universal dominion and, given him a name which is above every name a name that no other name can be compared with, this name stands alone. Jesus is not only the Redeemer, Saviour and the Christ the Anointed of God, but is also the only Son of God and as such his rank, his titles, his dignity are above all others. The name above every name refers to the name of Jesus the Saviour as no other being either in heaven or on earth can possess this name as Christ who is the Redeemer of the world does. Jesus alone is the only Saviour for fallen mankind there is no other that can redeem us to God but Christ and throughout eternity he will ever appear as the sole Saviour of the human race.

Even before his birth, Gabriel stated that his name should be called Jesus and gave the reasons for this stating that he will save his people from their sins. The qualifications of the Saviour of the world were so extraordinary, the redeeming acts so marvellous, and the results so glorious both to God and man, that it is impossible to conceive a higher name or title than that of Jesus the Saviour of the world.

**Every knee will bow at the name of Jesus:** the glorious words, every knee will bow at the name of Jesus and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord means that a new age is coming in which every angelic being in heaven, everyone on earth and everyone raised from the dead will submit themselves to Christ and honour him as Lord and King. This immediately transcends the mind of the ardent Bible student to John's vision of Christ in the book of Revelation where the Lord is pictured as a great warrior with the name: -

- King of kings and Lord of lords written on his robe and on his thigh (Rev. 19:11-16).

This is a picture of a mighty and universal deliverer of nations a title of great honour? Here Christ is exalted to be the Prince and the Saviour of men and woman of all nations. In this new age Christ the King will rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign. The dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth, or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce.

All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

**For further information see titles: -**

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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### **Work out your Own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.**

Philip. 2:12 ----- <sup>12</sup>Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,

The words, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” is a universal principal for every brother and sister in Christ throughout all ages to live by because the measure of a Christians character is not measured when they are in church or with their brothers and sisters in Christ since we are all on our best religious behaviour in these moments. The true measure is when we are on our own or with work colleagues or secular friends it is then that we can be tempted to deny our faith or compromise our standards and speak or behave in a worldly manner to be popular or advance our career opportunities.

The words, with fear and trembling carry the following three ideas: -

1. Having a healthy respect for God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and knowing that if anyone builds on the foundation (the Lord Jesus Christ) with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw each one's work will become manifest, for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, they will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they themselves will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:12-15). Since no brother or sister wants to stand naked (i.e., disgraced and ashamed before the Lord) we should be endeavouring to do all we can to avoid any behaviour that would not only offend God and bring a bad testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but that would bring harm and hurt to another human especially our brothers and sisters in Christ.



2. It is always being conscious that if anyone could be justified through the law, then Christ died for no purpose and knowing that we are only saved by faith in Christ and by God's grace so that we are never tempted to justify ourselves by our own self-effort and religious works and thereby nullify the grace of God. In this context, working out our own salvation in fear and trembling embraces the idea of having a healthy fear against trusting in anything other than Christ alone for salvation because the moment we do trust in ourselves or anything else we nullify the grace of God and by our actions declare that Christ's death was of no value.

Equally as horrific as this is the fact that when we forsake grace we separate ourselves from Christ because it was only by grace that God made us alive in Christ and it is only by grace that any brother or sister has been saved. The reason we should have a healthy fear against trusting in ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions to save us to eternal life especially when we know that Scripture teaches that every brother and sisters salvation is not their own doing, but the gift of God and without grace no-one can be united to Christ and whoever is without Christ is separated from God and without God no-one can be saved to eternal life. This means that in regards to eternal salvation, Christ, God, Grace and Faith, are all on an equal par with each other since no-one can be saved to eternal life without any one of them (Gal. 2:21) (Gal. 5:4) (Eph. 2:5) (Eph. 2:8).

Working out our own salvation in fear and trembling also means make sure no-one entices us back under the LAW to be saved. There is a danger for Christians who are faithful in religious ministry, church and Bible meeting attendance, regular study or daily reading the Bible to begin to trust these things for their righteousness that leads to eternal life, but though they are all good in themselves, not one of them has any power to save us to eternal life, our trust for righteousness that leads to eternal salvation must be solely fixed in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace.

3. Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling is living with a mental consciousness that the Lord Jesus Christ will return as the King of kings and Lord of lords and not only judge the world, but also all who those who have confessed to believe in his name will stand before him and give an account of themselves, tragically not everyone who says to him, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but the one who did the will of his Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to Christ, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will he declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness (Matt. 7:21-23).

**Those who will enter the Kingdom of heaven:** the spirit behind the law is love, because each law protects another human from harm. In the book of Romans Paul states, love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10). The spirit of the law is to protect the innocent from physical, financial, sexual, verbal, emotional and spiritual harm this is why those who know God aim to keep the law because it is the right and loving thing to do. It fulfils the Ten Commandments regarding man, and the royal law love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31) (Jas. 2:8). It pleases God and brings a good testimony to His name and the name of, Jesus and the Christian faith.

Those who belong to Christ aim to keep the law not to get saved, but because they are saved. They understand that righteousness is a free gift of God that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and cannot be earned by self-effort. Though the law is splendid as a guide to understanding God's will, as a means of reunion with God, the God we have sinned against, it is a hopeless failure nevertheless both law and grace go together, the law without the Gospel is diagnosis without remedy, but the Gospel without law is only the good news of salvation for people who don't believe they need it because they have never heard the bad news of judgment, the law is not the Gospel, but the Gospel is not lawless (Rom. 3:19-20) (Eph. 2:13-22) this means that those who will enter the Kingdom of God will be those who endeavour to live by the royal law love your neighbour as yourself.

- Micah wrote: "What the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God" (Micah 6:5-10).

- Isaiah says: “The LORD loves justice, hates robbery and wrong doing” (Isaiah 61:8).
- Jeremiah said: “Those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights” (Jer. 9:24).

The great prophets Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah clearly show us that the people the LORD loves are not only those who acknowledge God, but who also uphold justice, do not lie, deceive or make promises they do not intend to keep, but speak the truth, do what is right, show respect and give help to others when able and make choices that lead to peace. These are the things the LORD delights in and that bring His favour.

**Jesus famous Sermon on the Mount:** the constant theme throughout Jesus famous Sermon on the Mount is doing what is right before God by seeking the way of peace in all situations. Jesus calls Christians to treat people fairly and with respect, dignity, decency grace compassion, kindness, mercy and to be quick to forgive. This means living a life that honours God and the Lord Jesus Christ is about doing all we can do to protect people from harm and being dominated by the thought, “What action can I take or do that will help and encourage this person.” It is all about doing right to others. This is the reason the message Jesus spoke on the mountain is referred to as, “The Famous Sermon” because the principals if followed not only by Christians but all humanity are the only way to peace (Matt 5). A wicked person is primarily one who deliberately and consciously denies the existence of God and does harm to other humans.

**For further information on Jesus Famous Sermon see: -**

- Matthew 5 in Commentary New Testament (ON WEBSITE MENU).

**Work out your own salvation:** the words, work out your own salvation (v12) clearly show that we should not be judging the salvation of another brother or sister or use the bad behaviour of others who confess Christ (especially those in leadership) as an excuse for our own lack of knowledge or for a reason to sin or forsake the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Work out your own salvation is a call to take responsibility for our own actions, behaviour and salvation and our relationship with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. It means that when we stand before the Lord we will not be able to say, “But Lord they made me behave that way,” or “But Lord he did the same thing and he was a minister.” There will be no excuses each of us will give account for ourselves regardless of the behaviour of others.

### Philippians 3.

#### **We are the Real Circumcision.**

Philip. 3:3 -----<sup>3</sup>For we are the real circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

Circumcision in the Jewish mind was without doubt deemed to be one of the highest standards of righteousness since they believed that an uncircumcised person was separated from God and therefore unclean. Because of this mindset no religious Jew (especially those in high position of leadership) would willingly put themselves in the company of an uncircumcised person since they considered them to be unclean. The reason the Jewish nation held circumcision in such high regard was because God made the following covenant with Abraham and his offspring saying: -

- Every male among you shall be circumcised and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised it shall be an everlasting covenant and any male who is not circumcised shall be cut off from Israel because he has broken my covenant” (Gen. 17:10-14) (Gen. 17:23-27).

**NOTICE:** circumcision was a sign they were God’s people and not a guarantee of salvation. We know this because Paul tells the Roman church that: -

- Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness before he had been circumcised. Abraham received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he already had by faith while he was still uncircumcised so that God could make Abraham the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to the uncircumcised as well, to the circumcised who also walk in the footsteps of the faith Abraham had before he was circumcised (Romans 4:9-12).

Nevertheless though circumcision was a sign of God's covenant with Israel many in the Jewish faith had turned it into the means of salvation (i.e., as long as they were circumcised they were right with God), this is one of the reasons for the lack of the fruits of the Spirit amongst many of the religious rulers of Jesus and Paul's generations.

**One of Paul's greatest battles:** throughout Paul's ministry circumcision was a re-occurring thorn to the Gospel amongst the Jewish brothers. The problem Paul faced was not that these Jewish brothers didn't believe in Christ, but that they denied grace to be saved. This is why these Jewish brothers were so deceptive, it is most likely they taught the promises of Abraham, that Jesus was the Son of God and the death and resurrection of Christ, but lacked insight into God's saving grace and that it is our faith that God counts as righteousness and not in the act of circumcision or any form of self-effort in adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days or religious keeping religious customs and traditions.

**The real circumcision put no confidence in the flesh:** Paul tells the Philippians that, the real circumcision (meaning those who are truly saved) are not those who are descendants of Abraham or born a Hebrew or Jew, but those who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh (v3) meaning they put not trust in self-effort to earn righteousness that leads to eternal life.

The word glory means to boast or vaunt and in this context it carries the idea of boasting and rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ for our righteousness that leads to salvation in contrast to trusting in our own abilities, self-effort and adhering to ceremonial rites or keeping religious customs and traditions.

**Worship by the Spirit of God:** means to worship in truth as opposed to worshipping in hypocrisy and pretence as the prideful and hypocritical chief priests, Pharisees and scribes were doing in Jesus era.

**Putting no confidence in the flesh:** putting no confidence in the flesh means, not relying on the law, good deeds and works to earn salvation it means that we do not trust in anything we can do to be saved, but solely rely on the righteousness God imputes to us because of our faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, it means that our heart, mind, intellect and emotions are totally surrendered to God's foreordained and eternal plan of salvation in Christ contrasted to trusting in anything we may do or be doing no matter how good it maybe.

The following verses clearly show that righteousness that leads to eternal salvation is a pure and free gift from God: -

- Now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law (Rom. 3:21).
- Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness (Rom. 4:9).
- Abraham received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well (Rom. 4:11).
- The free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:17) (see also Romans 5:15-16).
- The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23).
- By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8).

These verses clearly show that faith was counted to Abraham (the father of faith) as righteousness and received by him prior to him being circumcision and that grace; righteousness and eternal life are a free gift and has absolutely nothing to do with the law. This is the reason Paul is warning all brothers and sisters in Christ not to put any confidence in the flesh to save them to eternal life.

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### **Paul Desired To Be Found in Christ.**

Philip. 3:9-11 ----- <sup>9</sup>and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the LAW, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—<sup>10</sup>that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup>that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

It is interesting to notice that the greatest desire and passion of Paul was not to increase in head knowledge but, to be found in Christ. This carries the following two ideas: -

- 1 Paul's sole focus and heart felt passion was to be accepted by the Lord when he returns in glory at the last trumpet as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.
- 2 The term "In Christ" carries the idea that: -
  - We fully belong to Christ.
  - We are together and in union with Christ.
  - We are in full agreement with Christ and sharing in his divine nature.
  - We are by faith in a new race that Christ is the head of. Prior to this we were in the old race of which Adam is the head of. We could say we were in Adam's race and in Adam, but are now we are Christ and in Christ's race. But being in Christ also means that our heart and mind is full of love, compassion, mercy, kindness and forgiveness etc., (not only toward our brothers and sisters in the Lord, but also toward those outside the Kingdom of God) and that God's will; God's eternal plan; God's love; His purposes and promise are engraved in our hearts and mind and that the Lord Jesus Christ is our greatest love and our greatest desire.

**NOTE:** any person we deeply love and worship can be formed in us. Every married person who has ever experienced self-sacrificing, compassionate and supporting love will have experienced the one they loved being formed in their heart their mind and their emotions. When someone loses a spouse, family member or friend they have been close to for many years and loved deeply the presence of that person will remain as a real entity in their mind and heart. For some it will be to the end of their lives while for others it will dissipate over time (depending on the depth of love and the length of time they have loved) for others though the memory will remain the spiritual presence will pass when new love blossoms.

**Christ in you:** (and a young girl) the following is a true story and a good example of a person being in the heart of another. An eight-year old disabled girl, whose best friend was her mother was doing her first live stage show at her school. The mother loved her daughter, but could not be at the opening show as she was in hospital with terminal cancer. A television reporter asked the young girl if she would be sad and miss her mother at the opening of the show. The small girl with tears in her eyes said, "Yes I will miss her, but she will be in my heart where she belongs."

Love for a person creates the reality and presence of that person in the human heart. This presence is in direct proportion to the love (i.e., the greater the love the greater the presence). All faithful Christians know that God and Jesus love them by looking at the bloodstained cross. Whenever we doubt God's love all we have to do is look back to the cross and see what it cost the Father to save us and how

much His Son suffered so that we could have put upon us a royal crown and majestic robe of righteousness apart from the law and works and not only be justified but granted eternal life in everlasting glory. Paul wrote the following majestic words, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

**Not having a righteousness of my own:** the following majestic words of Paul are the Good News and the very heart of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ: Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

There was absolutely no-doubt in Paul's mind that to be found in Christ and accepted by him had nothing to do with law keeping or self-effort to attain to righteousness that leads to eternal life, but was solely dependent on the righteousness that comes from God and through faith in Christ.

This is because righteousness that is attained by the law only deals with outward actions and not the inward nature. The Pharisees, chief priest and scribes outwardly kept the law in the smallest detail, so in that sense under the law they were righteousness, but inwardly they were corrupt so much so Jesus spoke of them in the following way: -

- Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel! "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness (Matt. 23:23-27).

Though most brothers and sisters in the Christian faith are not like the Scribes and Pharisees nevertheless we do all live in a corrupt fallen body that is not only tainted with self, ego and pride but infected with sinful dysfunction and aberrations such as jealousies, anger, coveting, lustful thoughts, greed and selfish desires etc., which means not one of us can stand before the Holiness of God and boast we are without sin and pure before him. In fact John in his letter tells us: -

- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, but if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us (1 John 1:8-10).

Paul was very aware of the fallen nature he had inherited from Adam the earthly father of us all, this is why he is so passionate and zealous for the Gospel since it proclaims everyone can be righteous before God and saved to eternal life despite the inward fallen and sinful and corrupt nature we have all inherited from our earthly father Adam. This is why Paul so strongly states that he was not trusting in the righteousness he might outwardly attain to by self-effort in keeping the law and religious rites, customs and traditions, but rather by being fully dependent on God's righteous that comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**That I may know Christ and the power of his resurrection:** the words, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection (v10) links back to Paul's statement that he was trusting in Christ for righteousness and not in, law keeping. These words of Paul shine a brilliant spotlight on the following two majestic truths.

1. The only way for any brother or sister in Christ to know the Lord is not through trusting in their own self-effort to attain to the perfection of the laws standard of Holiness, but by being surrendered to God's eternal plan of salvation and fully trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to be counted as righteous by God.
2. The only way anyone is going to attain to the resurrection from the dead is to fully trust in Christ for righteousness that leads to eternal life and is acceptable to God in contrast to trusting in self-effort and ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions etc.

## Sharing in Christ's Suffering.

The suffering in the following words of Paul, that I may share his sufferings (v10) embrace any persecution or hardship a brother or sister in Christ may suffer because of their faith in the Lord, for some it maybe physical pain or prison, for others it maybe, financial loss or rejection by family members and friends.

Whenever a brother or sister in Christ witnesses or does-good in Christ's name and it brings any form of suffering or hurt physically, financially, emotionally or mentally they are by their suffering sharing in the sufferings of Christ. This is because the suffering is a result of their faith in Christ, should they deny the Lord all their suffering would instantly vanish like a vapour in the wind.

**Becoming like Christ in his death:** Paul's earnest desire was to, become like Christ in his death (v10) these words carry the following two thoughts: -

1. It was Paul's inward and earnest passion to live a lifestyle that honoured Christ's heavenly Father. Paul knowing that he could not attain to the perfection he desired beautifully expresses the heartfelt inward passion of his mind and heart and his attitude toward life in the following words, not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, I do not consider that I have made perfection my own, but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (v12-14).
2. Paul desired to be raised as Christ was (i.e., to be clothed with an immortal body and raised to eternal life and everlasting glory).

**That I may attain to the resurrection from the dead:** the words, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead (v11) does not mean that Paul had doubts about being accepted by Christ. If this was the case everything he has taught about faith and God's grace would be nullified and worse still if Paul the author of most of the New Testament and who suffered far more for Christ than most in the Christian faith are ever called to do had doubts about being saved how can any of us ever be expected to trust in the Lord and in God's grace.

**The verse carries two dominant thoughts: -**

1. Paul was going to do whatever he had to no-matter what it cost or how much suffering it meant to attain to the resurrection. Meaning no-matter what hardships and troubles came his way he was not going to give up his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Paul had taught the Corinthian brothers and sisters that if anyone builds on the foundation (the Lord Jesus Christ) with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each one's work will become manifest, for the DAY will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, they will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they themselves will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:12-15).

This shows that Paul was very aware that not everyone was going to be counted as a worthy and honourable servant, which means the statement, "That by any means possible i may attain the resurrection from the dead also carries the idea that Paul will not only do everything possible to honour God, but will also willingly suffers loss so that he will be found by Christ to have been a worthy servant of the Lord's at the resurrection of the dead as opposed to feeling ashamed.

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**Christ Jesus has made me his Own.**

Philip. 3:12-16 ----- <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>13</sup>Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: Forgetting what lies behind and straining (reaching forth in KJV) forward to what lies ahead <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward

call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. <sup>16</sup>Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

This attitude of Paul should be made the stronghold of every brother and sister in Christ and not only be made the wallpaper of our mind but be spiritually engraved into every cell of our being. There are two reasons for this statement: -

1. Not one of us can stand before the Holiness of God and boast we are without sin in fact if we do it shows that we do not understand the Scriptures or the Good News of the Gospel since John tells us, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and if we say we have not sinned we make him a liar and his word is not in us (1 John 1:8-10).
2. Though most who long to honour God never give up the pursuit of perfection and are always aware that they have not obtained it, for some brothers and sisters in Christ who don't understand the grace of God the mental torment and condemnation of failing to live up to the holy standard the law demands robs them from the joy of being in Christ and even worse can result in them falling away from the faith since for them the high calling in Christ Jesus seems impossible.

This is why the attitude Paul expresses is so majestically beautiful, instead of being trodden under foot and defeated by our sinful aberrations and dysfunctions we not only put them behind us, but forget them and continue to move forward with our mind and our eyes firmly set on the prize of eternal life and everlasting glory. Paul's statement is even more magnificent when we consider that the purpose of the law is to bring us to this place of hopelessness in attaining to its perfect standard of holiness so that we will trust solely upon the Lord Jesus Christ for our righteousness that leads to eternal life and not our own self-effort or adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions.

**Christ Jesus has made me his own:** what awe-inspiring, stunning and comforting words, Christ Jesus has made me his own (v12) especially when one stops to consider that these words of Paul do not only apply to him alone, but to every faithful brother and sister in Christ. It means that Jesus has made whoever accepts the message of the cross and the Gospel that leads to salvation his own. Paul motivation to serve and suffer for the Lord was motivated by three great passions: -

1. Because Jesus had made him his own, Paul was fully aware that Christ loved him as an elder brother loves their younger sibling.
2. Because of God's promise of an immortal body, eternal life and everlasting glory.
3. Because he saw those in the world not only as already dead and separated from God, but destined to eternal death and from this mindset and knowing the love and grace of God himself earnestly desired to translate those in the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of light and save them to eternal life and everlasting glory.

**The upward call of God in Christ Jesus:** the Christian faith is called an, upward call of God in Christ Jesus (v14) for the following two reasons: -

1. Because God the creator and heavenly Father, reaches down to the lowest of the sons of Adam and lifts them from the depth of sin to the highest heights in the eternal heavens.
2. Because every sinner saved begins as a spiritual infant full of worldly desires, past baggage, hurts and false teachings and all sorts of fruits of the flesh (i.e., selfish ambition, ego, pride, jealousies, anger sinful passions and greedy desires etc.), but as they grow in the love of Christ these things slowly fall away and are replaced with the things that bring a good testimony to the name of Christ, this is the reason the Christian faith is called an upward call.

**Let the mature think this way:** the words perfect (in the KJV) or mature (in the ESV) in the following verse, let those of us who are mature/perfect think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you (v15) can hardly be supposed to mean that Paul is addressing them as already being perfect, when he had just said of himself that he had not attained to the state of perfection himself (v12), but rather that those who he is writing to might be aiming at perfection. The word, perfect/mature here is used in the same sense in which Paul uses it in his letter to the Corinthians when he told them, "Not to be children in their thinking or infants in resisting wickedness, but in their thinking to be mature (1 Cor. 14:20). This means that they should be thoroughly instructed and deeply experienced in Christian knowledge and godly behaviour.

It means, having the wisdom of God contrasted to the wisdom of the world (1 Cor. 2:6) and carries the idea of being of full age, able to discern what is right and what is not in any given situation or circumstance (Heb. 5:14). Being perfect/mature in this context is about being humble and filled with the fruits of the Spirit and doing all that is in our power to uphold the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ contrasted to being prideful (exalting others and self) and causing quarrels, contentions, strife and divisions.

**If you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you:** (v15) Paul with these words is saying to those amongst his listeners that have not yet grown in the fruits of the Spirit or the full glory and grace of the Gospel and to those who still had doubts regarding the Gospel or were still holding fast to Jewish law and customs to be saved that God would reveal even these things to them while they are honest and sincere in their seeking after Him.

**Hold true to what you have attained:** Paul's with the following words, "Hold true to what we have attained (v16) shows that he understands that every brother and sister in the Lord will be at different levels of intellectual understanding and at different levels of developing the fruits of the Spirit and that on our spiritual journey in growing in the Lord and the fruits of the Spirit we should not condemn ourselves by what we lack but focus on and hold fast to what we have achieved and keep our eyes fixed on the eternal prize at the end of our spiritual journey in Christ.

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### **Our Citizenship is in Heaven.**

Philip. 3:20 -----<sup>20</sup>But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

The words, our citizenship is in heaven (v20) refers to those in Christ who have their minds set on the things that honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ it carries the idea of being humble and filled with the fruits of the SPIRIT in contrast to being driven by pride and ego and having the mind set on earthly and worldly things that would offend God and bring a bad testimony to the name of Jesus.

**We await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:** the words, we await a Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ (v20), refers to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce.



All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

**For further information see titles: -**

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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#### **Philippians 4.**

##### **The Book of Life.**

Philip. 4:3 -----<sup>3</sup>Yes, I ask you also, true companion (true yokefellows in KJV) help these women, who have laboured side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

The words, whose names are in the Book of Life (v3) may mean that God has a literal hard covered book with real pages in heaven, but it is far more likely that the book in this context is used as a symbol of God's eternal mind. Just as man-made computers can store billions of bits of information in a few seconds and recall it at the same speed no matter how much time may have past.

Likewise those who are devoted to God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ are not only engraved on the eternal mind and eternal memory of God, but also their entire life is recorded there. Much like the global internet keeps a record of every person who uses it which can be accessed at any time by those who have the power and authority to do so.

**For further information concerning the Book of Life, see the titles: -**

- The Book of Life and the Lake of Fire.
- The Book of Life and the Book of the Lamb.
- Resurrection (Second or White Throne Judgment).
- All titles are in, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## **I Can Do All Things Through Him Who Strengthens Me.**

Philip 4:10-13 ----- <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>I can do All things through him who strengthens me.

This verse has been used by certain religious ministers to teach those in Christ that no matter what they choose to do (start a business, a church, a new career etc.,) they will succeed because they can do all things in Christ who strengthens them, but this is not what Paul is saying. Just prior to this verse Paul has just said, "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound in any and every circumstance" (v11-12).

The context Paul's statement, I can do all things through him who strengthens me is in, is about contentment and having a peaceful mind. In this context this means that Paul is saying, "No matter whether he is rich or poor, has plenty or lacks he is always content and at peace since he can cope with any situation or circumstance (good or bad) through Christ who spiritually and mentally strengthens him.

### **Christ strengthens faithful brothers and sisters in the following two ways: -**

1. Their minds and hearts are strengthened by the knowledge that they are not citizens of this mortal earthly world but of the eternal heavenly Kingdom and in their awareness that the love of God and the Lord Jesus Christ is upon them not because of their self-effort to attain to the laws perfect standard of Holiness, but because of their faith and God's grace. Added to this glory is the awe-inspiring comfort that God has promised that at the end of their mortal life with all its troubles and sorrows they will be resurrected to eternal life and everlasting glory were there will be no sorrow and no sadness.
2. Their minds and hearts are strengthened supernaturally and mystically by God's Spirit that transcends their own mental ability to rise above whatever the troubling circumstance, hardship or sorrow maybe.

**The Secret:** Paul's words, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need (Phil. 4:12) implies that not every brother and sister in Christ learns this secret (maybe attain to it might be a better phrase). Paul does not speak of this as a secret in the sense that it is hidden, but in the sense that not everyone in Christ attains to it. This is most likely because the power of this secret is in direct accordance to the depth of our surrender to Christ and our exaltation of him as Lord and King not only in our heart and mind, but also in our passions, desires, ambitions, goals and dreams. When Christ is seated as the reigning King in our inner most being above all these nothing can shatter our lives or bring it to ruin, mentally, emotionally or spiritually.

Jesus said, "If anyone would come after him, let them deny themselves and take up his cross" and follow him" (Matt. 16:24) this means to put Christ first in our mind, heart and emotions and make him the King who is seated on the throne of our hearts and mind. The deeper our love for the Lord and the bigger his throne is in our heart the greater the contentment we will have in our minds. The key to the secret Paul is talking about is to be far more attached to Christ than we are attached to the things of this world. The secret for a Christian to attain to contentment and peace in their minds is in direct accordance to the attachment they have to Christ in their hearts (i.e., the greater the attachment the greater the peace and contentment).

### **NOTE.**

This does not mean that they should be without ambition, goals and dreams and be passionate about them, in fact quite the contrary. God gives ambitions and dreams of all sorts and if we are not passionate about them we will never achieve them. One of the reasons (there are of course many more) God's desires that those devoted to His Son make Christ the exalted King and Lord seated on the throne of their inner most being is so that should their goals, dreams and ambition fail or should they be struck with terminal sickness, the loss of a job, home or child though they will obviously be grieved they will not be crushed.

This is because the eternal royal King sitting on the throne of their heart will in that crises and that deep sorrow stand up and spiritually comfort those suffering in such deep sorrow with a comfort and strength that not only transcends natural thinking, but also their own mental and emotional strength in that crisis moment and tragic experience.

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### **God will supply every Need According to His Riches in Glory.**

Philip 4:19-20 ----- 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.

Pauls majestic words, "My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ" is most likely one of the most abused verses in the Bible since many religious leaders worldwide use it to teach their followers that God will fulfil their dreams, prosper them and fill their bank accounts to overflowing etc. This is not only reading far more into the verse than what Paul is saying, but a good example of taking a verse out of context (mostly to entice people into the church by false promises).

The glorious, royal and majestic words, according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus by far surpass anything this mortal world can offer since anything the world gives can not only be taken in a moment, but is also only temporary whereas God riches in Christ are eternal and no-one can rob them nor can anything take them from a faithful brother or sister in Christ.

### **God's riches in glory in Christ Jesus refer to those in Christ: -**

- Having their sins forgiven.
- Having favour and fellowship with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Having been adopted into the eternal family of God.
- Having been given the free gift of righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ.
- Having Gods promise of being resurrected to eternal life and everlasting glory.

**NOTE:** Paul most likely used the words, "My God" (v19) in these verses for the following three reasons: -

1. To separate his God (the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of creation and of heaven) from all other gods the pagans believed in.
  2. To separate the god of this world (i.e., the god of mammon/money and materialism) from the God of heaven.
  3. Because he is speaking from a personal relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Every brother and sister in the Lord should not only see God as the Almighty God and creator of the world, but also see God in the same way as Jesus and Paul viewed God, (i.e., as their God).
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### **SUMMARY: Salvation in Philippians.**

The Gospel message proclaims Christ humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death and therefore God highly exalted him and bestowed on him a name that is above every name (i.e., Jesus the Saviour of the world) and that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and everyone will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The Good News of the Gospel proclaims that righteousness that leads to eternal life comes only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace and not through self-effort and works of the flesh (i.e., trusting in strict adherence to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions have no power to save anyone to eternal life.

True brothers and sisters in Christ are not those who are born descendants of Abraham or are Hebrews or Jews, but those who worship God from an honest and true heart (in contrast to hypocrisy and pretence) and by faith not only believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, but also put no trust in the works of the flesh (i.e., what they can do themselves) to save them.

Every brother and sister in Christ should count others more significant than themselves, think on good and honourable things and be prepared to suffer for the Lord should they be called to do so. God has supplied everything that a sinner needs for righteousness that leads to eternal salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ whoever has Christ and faithfully follows him has eternal life. Every individual brother and sister in Christ should work out their own salvation and stand firm in the Lord and not judge another person's salvation because only God knows the heart.

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End.