



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - Philippians Study

Week 2 - Day 5

Approaching God

Read Psalm 67 - *May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us— so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us. May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.*

If you truly enjoy something, you instinctively want to help others praise it too. C.S. Lewis said, Praising it to others “completes the enjoyment.” So true enjoyment of God must lead naturally to mission - to praying for, and helping others see the beauty you see. Take a minute to ask God to reveal his beauty to you today so that you may enjoy him for who he is and that your enjoyment would send you out towards others. Who is on your heart today? Pray for them.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Philippians 2:1-4

Unity of mind is not easily cultivated when human beings of different backgrounds and temperaments find themselves sharing one another's company, but the resources that make such unity possible are available to the people of Christ in their fellowship with him. In this passage, Paul starts to show us the way.

Paul does not give any commands in chapter 1 until vs. 27. Until vs. 27 he is simply reminding them of their status as beloved children of God and partners in the gospel with him. In other words, our ability to obey must grow out of who we are in Christ and what has already been accomplished for us. Beginning in 1:27 and carrying on into chapter 2, Paul begins to show the Philippians what it looks like for Christ's love to overflow in their lives.

Philippians 2:1-4 - 1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, **2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. Which words or phrases stand out to you as significant, important? Is anything repeated or emphasized?

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

- An imperative statement means that the verb or phrase in a particular statement carries with it the voice of a command. List the imperatives Paul lays out in these verses? What commands does he give?
- Paul doesn’t say we should bring our thinking in line with each other as a starting point. What is to be the center around which Christians unite?
- How should the truths and conditions of verse 1 lead to the application of verses 2-4? (*hint: there are at least 4 conditions in verse 1; can you identify them?*)

Meditation & Reflection Questions

- What are some practical ways to regard others as more important than you are? How might God be leading you to do that right now in your life?
- How can you look after someone else’s best interests this week?

Close in Prayer:

How can I rejoice today in light of this passage?

What do I need to repent of today in light of this passage?

What requests do I need to make today in light of this passage?

Commentary on Philippians 2:1-4

Phil. 2:1–2 - The peak of Christian living is unity in love. The Philippians are doing many things right and Paul rarely criticizes them but he wants them to press on to full maturity. Unity is the greatest reach of Christian maturity. He is pleading with them, almost speaking rhetorically. He knows that they have at least some of all the things he lists here. He is using that confidence to motivate them to grow more in unity. All the blessings and love that we have from Christ individually ought to motivate us to press on to love one another better. The fact that we are “united with Christ” is a huge “encouragement” to Christians. It should give us great courage to live as He lived. We can never be cut off. He has paid for our sin, in Him we have died to our old life, and now He lives in us; He guarantees our final victory and resurrection. How can we not be strengthened by these unseen truths and realities?

His saving, forgiving, and brotherly “love” bring great comfort. All human hearts long to be loved. Here, in Christ only, is full comfort and rest achieved. We experience this love from Christ through the love of other believers. Not only this, but we are privileged to experience the intimacy of “fellowship” with the indwelling Holy Spirit. The third Person of the Trinity lives in me. All of this shows God’s Fatherly love for me. He knows my sufferings and is sympathetic. Christ has entered into our pain and can identify. Therefore He is not only compassionate in an emotional, affectionate way, but also He is gentle and patient with us. What more could anybody ask for?

Paul is not *doubting* that encouragement, participation in the Spirit, affection, and sympathy are realities in Christ and are present in the congregation at Philippi. He uses a conditional sentence (if) to provoke the Philippians so that they will reflect on whether these qualities are evident in their lives. The Philippian believers must make sure they continue to progress in the absolutely critical area of love for one another. As Paul emphasizes, they must be of the same mind. This does not imply a drab intellectual uniformity; rather, the Philippians are to use their diverse gifts (**1 Corinthians 12**) in an agreeable, cooperative spirit, with a focus on the glory of God.

Phil. 2:3–4 - There is always a temptation to be like Paul’s opponents in **1:17** and operate in a spirit of selfish ambition, looking to advance one’s own agenda. Such conceit (lit., “vainglory”) is countered by counting others more significant than yourselves. Paul realizes that everyone naturally looks out for his or her own interests. He does not command Christians to never think about themselves and their interests. This is impossible. Ephesians 5:29 makes it clear that all people are naturally hard-wired to love and think for themselves. This is right and ordained by God. Jesus commands us to love others as we love ourselves. We are never commanded to love ourselves, and we are never condemned for loving ourselves. We are condemned for not loving others. Even Jesus prayed fervently in the Garden for His own personal interests and desires. What made His so different from normal prayers is that the entire time He was submitted to do God’s will and serve the interests of others, even if it meant going against His own desires.