

Things Seen In Paul

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Phil. 4:9

A description of our Heavenly Father frequently used by Paul is “*the God of Peace*”.

- Rom. 15:33, “*Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.*”
- Rom. 16:20, “*And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*”
- 2 Cor. 13:11, “*Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*”
- 1 Thess. 5:23, “*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”
- Heb. 13:20, “*Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,*”

In similar fashion does Paul refer to God in Phil. 4:9 which serves as the text of our lesson.

Phil. 4:9, “*Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*”

In our text, we learn from Paul the key to having the “*God of peace*” blessing us in our lives.

It involves doing the “things”...

- Learned from Paul.
- Received from Paul.
- Heard about Paul.
- Seen in Paul.

What are some of “The Things Seen In Paul”, which if we do, will assure that the “*God of peace*” will be with us?

The answer can be found both in his epistle to the Philippians and in his other letters. For example, we see...

His concern for his brethren.

As expressed in Philippians.

With the case of Euodias and Syntyche.

Phil. 4:1-3, *“Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.”*

Indeed, with all the brethren there at Philippi.

Phil. 1:8-11, *“For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”*

Elsewhere, Paul reveals his concern.

For all of the churches.

2 Cor. 11:28-29, *“Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?”*

For brethren who are weak in faith.

- 1 Cor. 8:8-13, *“But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”*
- Rom. 14:14-21, *“I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy*

meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.”

- Rom. 15:1-3, “*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*”

As seen in Rom. 15:3, this concern for his brethren is simply a reflection of Christ’s concern for us, and therefore certainly worthy of our imitation.

Another thing seen in Paul that is worthy of imitation is...

His striving for perfection.

To the Philippians, Paul wrote:

Of his admission that he was not perfect.

Phil. 3:12, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”

Of his desire to press on, to reach forward, to press toward the goal.

Phil. 3:12-14, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

To the church at Corinth, Paul reveals...

That he viewed his Christian life as a “race”, a “boxing match”.

1 Cor. 9:24-26, “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that

striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.”

Where there is always room for improvement, lest he become “disqualified”.

1 Cor. 9:27, *“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”*

Why this desire for perfection? As revealed in Phil. 3:8-11, it was part of his “magnificent obsession” to “gain Christ and be found in Him.”

If we want the same for us, then we need to have the same desire!

Another thing seen in Paul that relates closely to this desire for perfection is...

His efforts to save the lost.

As expressed in his epistle to the Philippians.

His efforts continued despite being under house arrest.

Phil. 1:12-14, *“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.”*

He would willingly offer himself as a martyr if it would help.

Phil. 2:17, *“Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.”*

The degree to which he would go is seen in his epistles to the Corinthians.

He made himself a servant to all.

1 Cor. 9:19-23, *“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.”*

He endured much suffering as a minister of Christ and His gospel.

2 Cor. 11:23-27, *“Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”*

Even with so much suffering in his efforts to save others, we see yet another thing in Paul that is worthy of emulation...

His joy in suffering.

This “joy” is especially seen in the epistle to the Philippians.

Which we have seen time and again is an “epistle of joy”.

For example, his joy in Christ being preached, despite his imprisonment and the efforts of false preachers.

Phil. 1:12-18, *“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”*

Even if it meant martyrdom, he viewed it as a reason to rejoice, and wanted them to rejoice with him!

Phil. 2:17-18, *“Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.”*

In Romans, he explained why he would “rejoice in tribulations”.

Such trials and sufferings would produce “perseverance”.

Rom. 5:3, “*And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;*”

Which in turn would produce “character” and “hope”.

Rom. 5:4, “*And patience, experience; and experience, hope.*”

Conclusion.

Such were some of the qualities seen in Paul, that we also learn from him if we take his epistles seriously.

And we should, if we desire the “*God of peace*” to be with us and He clearly was with Paul throughout his life and service as a disciple of Jesus Christ!

Are the things seen in Paul, also seen in us? Are we living in such a way that we could say to others:

Phil. 4:9, “*Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*”

In view of such passages as 1 Tim. 4:12 and Titus 2:6-7, where we are called to be an example to others, we should!

- 1 Tim. 4:12, “*Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*”
- Titus 2:6-7, “*Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,*”

May the “*God of peace*” help us to live in such a way that we can be an example like Paul!

