

# Messages on Philippians

by

Walter L. Wilson, M. D.

Copyright @ 1943

## CHAPTER SIX

### CHRIST EXALTED

Paul was in love with Christ. Ever since that blinding flash of light on the Damascus road, Paul could see no one else but the Lord Jesus, His glorious Person and His wonderful work.

Paul, like David, set the Lord always before his face (Psalm 16:8). Because of this, the Lord set Paul always before His face (Psalm 41:12). Paul loved the Lord who permitted him to be put in prison. Christ had so won Paul's heart that he loved Him for everything He did. He never found fault, though the stripes were on his back and the chains were on his wrists. In each chapter in Philippians, Paul exalts the Lord Jesus in glowing terms.

Surely as we read this book we shall want to sing, "What a wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord."

- After the first chapter we will sing, "Jesus saves."
- After the second chapter we will sing, "But I know whom I have believed."
- After the third we will sing, "Following Jesus ever day by day,"
- At the end of the fourth, we shall burst out with that coronation anthem, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

In chapter 1 Christ is preached. Notice in verse 15 that there are various kinds of preachers, but each one is preaching the same lovely Lord. As long as the people hear about Christ, Paul is happy. He knows what Christ will do. He knows that Christ will save. He knows His saving power and the cleansing blood. He has experienced the presence of the Lord and knows His beauty and loveliness.

As long as the right medicine is given, Paul is not concerned with the kind of spoon that feeds it nor the hand that holds it. It is the medicine that will do the work and the medicine that every human heart needs is the love story of this lovely Lord. Paul could discern the spirit that was behind the message. It is always so. The audience knows whether the speaker feels his message or is merely giving a lecture on some interesting subject.

A lecturer under a chautauqua tent was giving a marvelous description of France. He told of the beautiful scenery, the great enterprises, the culture of the people, the military might, the educational advantages.

When he finished he asked if anyone in the audience would like to ask a question on the subject. An elderly woman rose near the back of the tent and said, "Please, sir, tell us how you felt when you sailed away from your beloved France, saw the hills fade in the distance, and realized that perhaps you would never see those shores again."

The speaker appeared confused. He hesitated. The woman remained on her feet, waiting for the reply. After a few embarrassing moments, the man said, "I am sorry, lady, but I never was in France."

She replied, "I suspected that was the case, for you talked as one giving a lecture and not as one who had had the experience."

So it was with Paul. He could sense the spiritual temper. Let us remember as we preach that those who listen know whether the message is coming from our lips or from our heart.

Paul rejoiced when he heard his Lord well spoken of under adverse conditions. How beautifully he expresses his feelings in verse 18. His heart was set on the preaching of Christ. He wanted to do it himself. He wanted others to do it. He knew that Christ was God's answer for every human heartbreak and every problem of man.

Not only did he want Christ talked about but he wanted Christ to live again in him in such a way that his body would be like a magnifying glass to make Christ look more wonderful, more blessed, more precious, more marvelous and more sufficient. He wanted Christ to be magnified by every possible means in him. There are many things to hinder in this path, but there are many things to augment and facilitate also. It seems to be entirely a matter of the heart, doesn't it?

When the heart is bent, set and firmly fixed on magnifying Christ, the center of the soul's affection, then the beautiful life of Christ is manifested in our mortal bodies as the Holy Spirit enables.

In chapter 2 Christ is revealed. What a description Paul gives of this lovely Lord! He tells us of the mind of Christ, the place Christ occupies, the feelings Christ had toward God the Father, the decisions He made about His reputation, the attitude He took toward men in all their wickedness and sin, the humbleness of Himself and the obedience to that worst of all enemies, the death on the Cross.

Those who know Christ best love Him best. Those who enter deepest into the humiliation of our precious Lord rejoice the most in His exaltation. Paul realized that those who know Christ best will follow Him the closest. He knew that if we were occupied with the loveliness of Christ, we would have little use for the apparent needs of ourselves.

- To see Christ in His humility is most effective in humbling ourselves.
- To see Christ highly exalted makes us desire to kneel at His feet in utter devotion and consecration.

So Paul sought to reveal Christ in word and in deed.

Paul answers some very important questions in verses 6-8.

Did Christ live before He was born of Mary? Yes, He had a pre-natal, glorious throne life.

Was Christ God during that time? Yes, He was in the very form of God, exercised all the prerogatives of God, and had in Himself all the attributes of God.

But Christ had such a wonderful spirit of humility and such a deep love for man that He was willing to leave the throne for a while and come down and mingle with us in all of our sorrow, shame and suffering. He knew that the journey would be filled with every heartache and sorrow and that the Cross was the end of the road. He knew that men would spit in His face and prove their utter wickedness by their treatment of the loveliest Person that ever walked the earth. Even though He knew all this, He did not grasp after the throne, nor covet staying up there as the God of Power. He preferred to come and be the Prince of Peace.

How Christ humbled Himself or emptied Himself we do not know. He still manifested His eternal Godhead both in His preaching and in His miracles. No man ever spake as He spake. No man performed as He performed, although in the Old Testament Elijah and Elisha both raised the dead. Elisha caused the iron to swim; Elisha fed a large multitude with a small portion of food. Still, none of these claimed to do it of himself. Nor did anyone continue to do so except in the single instance. Christ gave them the power to do it. Christ was doing it through them. Christ could do it continually, anywhere, anytime and of His own sovereign will.

How, then, did He humble Himself? His glory was manifested on the Mount of Transfiguration when from His raiment and from His precious body there issued those brilliant rays of white light above the brightness of the sun, the greatest light God created, and above the whiteness that the fuller could produce, the best of man's creation.

- He spoke and the multitude fell backward.
- He spoke and the storm ceased.
- He spoke and the tree withered.

His Godhead was manifested constantly in the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the mineral kingdom and the celestial kingdom.

He did lay aside His glorious power. He did become a weak little baby. He did eat and drink as other men do and was tempted in all points like as we, yet completely without any sign or response of sin. This is the Christ that we know. This is the One we trust, love, follow and obey. He is God's eternal Son.

Now we turn aside for a little while from the exaltation of our blessed Lord and note that He is our pattern. We are to be like Him. He is to fill us, manage us and distinguish us from others. Paul had much to boast of in his own religion. He gives a list of eight virtues which would be considered as assets by his fellow men.

He was circumcised, an Israelite, a Benjamite, a Hebrew, a zealous Pharisee, blameless before the law of God and persecuting that which he considered to be opposed to God. The world would call him an ideal Christian, but he did not know Christ. He did not believe in Christ. He was opposed to Christ. He did not want to have Christ preached or trusted.

Then one day he met Christ. What a chance took place! He had heard about Christ, but now he heard Christ Himself. Christ had revealed Himself to Paul and Paul was never the same again. From that time on, He was the pattern of Paul's life. Paul wanted to be like Christ in His life, in His death, in His preaching, in His sufferings. Christ was his sample, his example, his pattern, his goal, his objective.

All these other assets were reckoned liabilities. He counted them loss, dung, refuse, garbage, trash and ashes. Nothing now was worthwhile except to be like Christ. He wanted his thoughts brought into subjection to Christ. He even wanted to be crucified like Christ and to die as He died. Paul was fascinated, attracted and entranced by that marvelous Man of Galilee, the Christ of the Cross, the Lord on His throne in glory. He had seen the face of Jesus and cared for nought beside.

- He wanted to know Christ intimately.
- He wanted to know the power of the resurrected Christ in his own life.
- He wanted to enter fully into the secret, sacred thoughts of Christ in regard to His suffering for sinners and His becoming a Substitute for wicked men.
- Paul wanted to be poured into the very mold of Christ.
- He wanted to be soft and responsive to receive the very imprint of the Lord Jesus Christ in the mint of God.

Everywhere Paul went, he wanted people to see Christ Jesus. He said, "**Not I, but Christ.**"

- "Not I" in business or law.
- "Not I" in pleasure or in the home.
- "Not I" in religion or social service.

He hid himself in Christ Jesus. Paul "**put on**" Christ so that the life of Jesus was manifested in his body.

He told the Philippian saints that they could have this same attitude if they wanted it. In verse 15 he gives them the formula. Paul realized that everyone would not want Christ to be his pattern. Some would have their minds on the great men of earth and would want to be like them.

He knew that we are affected by those who are greater than we. Paul exposed himself to Christ so that in his thoughts, affections and purposes he was a follower of the Lamb. The Lord grant that we, too, may have such a holy desire.

In chapter 4 Christ is supreme. In verse 13 Paul feels himself almost omnipotent in and through Christ Jesus. With Christ dwelling in him, he can accomplish anything, is afraid of nothing.

- In Christ he has learned how to be abased as Christ was and to be exalted as He was.
- In Christ he has learned to be full of care about nothing whatever.

Did he float about in the sea after the shipwreck? Then he sang the praise of the Lord who “**plants His footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm.**” Was he smitten with thirty-nine stripes? Then he sang about his Lord who carried the burden of sin from the shoulders of the wicked world on His own blessed back. Was he beaten by the mob? He was in perfect peace as he sought to tell his tormenters about the precious Saviour who saves.

He knew how to pray to a God who knew how to answer. If the answer was “no,” Paul rejoiced. He had absolute confidence in the wisdom and knowledge of God. He did not question God’s decision or resent God’s answer. He had met the Prince of Peace. He knew the God of Peace and the lovely King of Peace was with him wherever he went.

He urges the Philippian saints to rejoice continually in this mighty Lord of their lives. Because Christ is supreme, His people may always rejoice in Him. Because Christ is the Sovereign, we will never be disappointed, discouraged, nor cast down. Christ rules the raging sea. Christ controls the elements. Christ is Lord of lords so that no lord can mistreat us unless our Lord permits.

Every need may be met, as we read in verse 19, because Christ is so rich. He gives liberally to enrich us, but His abundant giving does not impoverish Him in the least. He gives and gives and the supply is exhaustless. The assets are always sufficient. No wonder Paul had peace. We shall have peace, too, if we learn to rest in the sufficiency of the Almighty Lord Jesus Christ.

~ end of chapter 6 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>

\*\*\*