

# Messages on Philippians

by

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### EXPECTATION FROM CHRIST

The Psalmist said, “**My expectation is from him**” (Psalm 62:5). It is a tonic for the heart to be always in an attitude and a spirit of expectancy. Some of God’s people never expect God to do anything. Some also never expect God’s people to do anything. Paul was not in this class. He was full of expectancy and hope. He believed that God’s people would grow in grace and would show a fruitful life because of his ministry.

Paul did not expect to find midgets and runts among the saints of God. He gave them the sincere milk of the word. They drank it in and so they grew and fruit abounded. We shall, in this message, consider some of the things that he expected from these Philippian saints.

In chapter 1 we see that he expected more love from their hearts, more progress in their lives, more prayer in their devotions, and more cooperation in their ministries.

Verse 9 reveals that he expected their love to grow, increase and abound. He expected it to be a sensible and intelligent love based on knowledge and discernment. The Lord wants us to love fervently, truly and constantly, but it is to be a love for right things, a pure love which will have the approval of the Lord.

If we love God’s people, we do not criticize them nor berate them. We seek to help them, encourage them and build them up in the most holy faith.

If we love our Bibles, we do not neglect them, nor read them carelessly, nor indifferently. We listen to the voice of God through the sacred page and seek grace from heaven to put it into practice.

If we love the Church, we do not find fault with it, but rather seek a remedy for that which seems to be wrong. We seek to be a helper instead of a boss. We work for it, not against it. In referring to the activities of the Church, we say “we,” not “they.” When we love the Church we seek to be identified with all of its interests and all of its projects. Love heals the wounds; love bridges the gap; love quiets the turmoil.

No wonder Paul expected their love to increase, for he knew they desired all these blessings.

In verse 10 we see that Paul expected them to be discerning Christians so that they would know what was of God and what was not; what came from heaven and what did not; what message was inspired by the Spirit and what was not.

He wanted them to be true in their testimony, and not be hypocrites. He wanted their whole Christian life to be sincere, just, true, wholehearted and upright in every respect. He expected that the ministry of the Word which he had given them, plus the ministry of others, plus their own study, plus their helpful counsel to one another, would produce this desired result.

Verse 19 shows that he expected them to pray efficient and effectual prayers. He knew they were praying people and that they prayed for him. He knew he would have many deliverances and be saved many heartbreaks and heartaches because they prayed. He knew that because they prayed the Spirit would work. What a confidence! What a reputation they had with this great man of God!

Verse 27 tells us that he expected more cooperation. He knew that if they loved one another and prayed for one another, they would work together blessedly and successfully. He expected this to be the case. He was not disappointed. They were good givers, both of themselves and of their substance, to the work of the Lord.

Chapter 2 reveals that he expected to see more unity among them, more unselfishness, more worship, more effort.

Verse 2 indicates that Paul expected unity of thought and love. In verse 4, we see that he expected unselfishness. Perhaps some were looking on their own things. We know that Euodias and Syntyche wanted their own way. Perhaps those who sided with these two were also selfish and wanted their own way.

Those who enlist in the army or the navy expect to abide by rules and regulations. There is no thought of sulking if one cannot have his own way. So it should be in the things of God. There must be unselfishness if we would see success crown the efforts and our Lord's smile resting upon His people.

Verse 10 tells us that Paul was looking forward to that day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. What a scene that will be and what a hope it is!

- The atheist will bow the knee to the Man whom he despised.
- The modernist will find that Jesus Christ is Lord and is God.
- The agnostic will see that it was fatal to him not to know the Son of God.
- The worldling will bow both knees to the Man whom he condemned to die.
- Pilate, too, will confess that the Man whom he rejected is the Man whom God exalted.
- The indifferent and the careless will bow and confess.

What a blessing it will be in that day, and Paul expected to see it.

In verse 12 we see that Paul expected more effort to be put forth by the saints of God. He wanted them to work well for the Lord, whether he was there or not, whether there were special meetings or regular meetings. He wanted them to study the Word, teach the Word and win souls just as much in his absence as in his presence. He expected them to follow the inner urge of the Holy Spirit and spend and be spent for the honor and glory of the Lord Jesus. He looked forward to a good report concerning their efforts.

In verse 16 we find that he expected more preaching and perhaps better preaching. They were to hold forth the word of life. All of them were to do it; each of them was to do it. They were to do it constantly, wisely and helpfully. They were not to hold forth theology as such. They were not to paint only pictures of heavenly things. They were to hold out for the hungry hearts of the people the precious Word of God; fresh, not stale; soft, not hard; in abundance, not scantily; freely, not grudgingly.

He expected them to find troubled hearts and then to use the Word of Life in the way in which those hearts needed it. What a blessed expectation on the part of this great leader of God's people!

In chapter 3 we find that Paul expected grace and growth. Verse 2 reveals that he desired more carefulness on their part. He wanted them to discern wisely and to know when things savored of God and when they did not.

Verse 9 indicates Paul's desire for more holiness in his own life. He wanted to be where he belonged — hidden in Christ. He wanted God's people to know that as far as he was concerned, Christ alone was the Sovereign of his soul.

He seemed to be afraid lest people should think that he was good and right and wonderful apart from Christ. He did not want them to think more of him than they should. He did not want to be one thing in public and another in private. He expected to be more like Christ and to be more godly and more devoted to his absent Lord.

In verse 10 we see that Paul expected more knowledge. He knew much but he wanted to know more. He understood a great deal but he wanted to grasp something more. He was not satisfied merely to be saved from hell. He wanted to go on to much greater things, until he felt that he knew this lovely One with whom he was to live forever. He wanted to have the consciousness of the indwelling Christ in his soul constantly.

Verse 14 states that his ambition and expectation was to press forward and gain the prize. More ambition was necessary for growth in grace. He had to press forward for there were many hindrances. He had to lay aside the weights and avoid those who would hinder him. He kept his eye on the prize for he wanted it.

He knew there was something better ahead and he determined to obtain it. A godly ambition is essential. The Lord grant more of it.

In chapter 4 we see that Paul expected more yieldedness. He mentions it specifically in verse 5, for the word “**moderation**” sometimes is translated “*yieldedness*.” Euodias and Syntyche evidently were not yielding to each other. They were pulling apart instead of together. They were hindering the church instead of helping it. They were the brakes on the buggy to keep it from going.

If each one would yield a little, both would lose something, but they would gain each other and much more. The grace of yielding is one we should covet earnestly. It is one of the “best graces.”

“**Yielding pacifieth great offences**” (Ecclesiastes 10:4). The cotton bale stops the cannon ball much more effectively than a stone wall. It is surely not necessary that we have our own way all the time. Why should we? Perhaps the other way is better. Paul expected that the saints would yield to one another. He expected great things from them because they had a great Saviour to save them, a great Holy Spirit to teach them, and a great man of God to shepherd them.

Verse 4 indicates that Paul expected more happiness. Not many of God’s people are happy. Once in a while you find a singing Christian who sings the whole day long. Once in a while you meet one who is radiant, but not often. Even orthodox Christians are not usually found singing the Doxology. They believe the truth, stand for the truth, defend the truth, but they are not very happy while doing it. Paul expected more happiness. He knew it was necessary because the rough road would be more easily traveled if there was a song on the journey. He expected them to learn the sweet secret of being constantly happy in the Lord.

In verse 6 we see that Paul expected the believers to have more rest in their lives. Care prevents rest. Lack of prayer hinders rest. Carrying burdens certainly produces no rest. If, however, they would cast every care at Jesus’ feet, take their care baggage to the check room and check it so they would not need to carry it, then they would have rest.

Paul knew the secret of this. He had had much trouble and many burdens. He had experienced deep grief, but he had learned to rest in the Lord and leave his burden there. He could be content in poverty, distress, or suffering. He expected them to learn this secret more and more.

In verse 19 we see that Paul expected the believers to have more confidence in the living God — confidence in His provision and care, confidence in His teachings. Paul had great expectations for these Philippian saints, for he was a real shepherd of the sheep and desired their rich blessing.

Let us expect great things from God and from God’s people.

~ end of chapter 7 ~

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