

RATHMINES BIBLE SCHOOL - 1962

PHILIPPIANS

Speaker: Brother B. McClure

Study #3 - Chapter 3

Brother chairman and my dear brethren and sisters in Christ .

In the second chapter of the Philippians, we sketched the mind of Jesus Christ in relation to the work His Father gave Him to do. We also mentioned Timothy, Paul's dearly beloved son in the faith, the aspect of his mind to the work commissioned unto him; and also we studied Epaphroditus, that faithful brother of Paul, of how he hazarded his life that the gospel of peace might go forward.

Now in the 3rd chapter of the Philippians, Paul here discusses the aspects of his own life, and shows how he himself was influenced by the Christ, So this chapter opens up by saying, 'Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe'. Many commentators feel that because Paul uses the word 'finally' half way through his epistle; and again in the 4th chapter it repeats the same word, that these are broken letters joined together. That this word 'finally' (3063) here means 'furthermore' or 'the things that remain'; Paul is continuing with the same subject but is adding a further development to what he has spoken before; so he says, 'to repeat what I have said before and have told you in the past, this doesn't tire me but it is safer for you if I do repeat them'.

What are the things that Paul had spoken to them in this epistle and on other occasions? The things that Paul had spoken about was **the worthlessness of flesh**. That phrase, brethren and sisters, we have oft repeated in this bible school; it's a very important statement and it's a very important principle that we recognize the worthlessness of flesh. Flesh can do nothing, it is worth nothing, the only thing that we can do is to subjugate the flesh so that the Spirit of God can come in. That's what Paul had spoken to them in the past and those things which are contained in verse 2, he says, 'to beware of dogs'. It's amazing how certain folk take passages of scripture and wrest them somewhat; the word here really means 'beware of **the** dogs'. You know how people get that little sign and put it at the front of their house -(that's a perversion of scripture), but Paul here is speaking of being beware of **THE** dogs (2965); beware of those evil workers and beware of the concision'. The dogs to the Jews in time past was an unclean animal; it was the most depised and miserable of all creatures and it was unclean. The reason why for the Jew the dog was such was because it was an aggressive animal, it was useless because it did no work, they couldn't put it in the fields to do anything, and of course, we in Australia use the dogs for the sheep, but Israel didn't do that! The shepherd lead his sheep, so there was no use for the dog at all. It was more than that, it was a sign of an upper class, it was the sign of luxury, and the food that the dogs ate, could have well been given to children, and so because of that,

they were classed as a despised creature. Even the Greeks used it in a term of distaste; Paul says, 'beware of dogs', and whilst the Jews might have used that term against the Gentiles and even Jesus Christ Himself used the same term as against the Gentiles, when He says, 'cast not that which is holy to the dogs', and when He spoke to that Gentile woman concerning the bread which falls from the rich man's table and cast to dogs, He was associating her as a Gentile with the dogs. But it's more than that, when Ignatius writes to the ecclesia at Ephesus, concerning certain false brethren who are coming in, he calls them 'heretical teachers', mad dogs; so Paul here is speaking of a class who are lazy, who are useless, those who are the state and he incorporates in this, brethren, both Jew and Gentile alike. He's not talking about Gentiles alone, but as a way in which the dogs had encompassed about Jesus Christ, so they also were dogs within the ecclesia. They were the evil workers or mischievous workers as the word means. As Paul says in his 2nd epistle to the Corinthians chapter 11 verse 13, 'such are deceitful workers, the same word for evil workers; 'such are deceitful workers transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ'. You see, they are apparent worshippers, and mind you, brethren, they are workers, they do a particular work but they are the works of flesh. Whilst they might appear in the ecclesia to be carrying out works which we would observe with satisfactory regard; yet their heart was not right. As far as God was concerned, they were evil workers.

The record also says, 'Paul, beware of them and observe accurately and keep you eyes open for these kind of brethren; these act quite respectable and with apparent righteousness; watch them because their works will display them. 'Beware also, he says, of the concision', and whilst this doesn't apply to us so much today brethren, it can apply to us in principle. The word 'concision'(2699) really means 'mutilators' and Paul looking back to those under the Law, who were circumcised according to the Law of Moses, but now that the law of circumcision had passed away as the Law of Moses had been fulfilled, those who now wished to seek gratification in the Law and observance of the Law, as far as Paul was concerned, they were mutilators; and under the Law anyone who mutilated his flesh was termed as a 'pagan'. The mutilation of ones flesh and the cutting of ones flesh such as we have with the prophet Baal and Elijah, that was obnoxious to God. It savoured of pagan worship and so here was those who were making cuttings in their flesh, apparent worshippers of the gods, they had a knowledge but it wasn't an exact knowledge.

These are those who are spoken of in the 15th chapter of Acts verse 1, 'those who said, except you keep the Law of Moses, ye cannot be saved'. Beware of them, says Paul, of whom I have told you often, Philippians 3 verse 18, 'For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now even tell you weeping, that such are the enemies of the cross of Jesus Christ. Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things'. Here are those whose minds are centred on earthly things, here as James says in chapter 3 verse 15, 'they are earthly, sensual, they are devilish', and as Paul says in the Galatians 6 verse 8, 'he that soweth to the flesh, shall reap of the flesh corruption'. That, b&s, is all that flesh is good for! **corruptibility**. That is the destiny of all flesh, corruption. These are they who are influenced as we saw in the 2nd chapter and also the 1st, 'by strife and vain glory', that

vanity of mind and conceit; they are the ones who sow to the flesh, whose end, says Paul, is destruction, which we read in the 2nd epistle of Peter chapter 2 and verse 1, 'But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction'. Dare any of us bring into the gospel of peace another gospel, dare any of us bring in a damnable heresy brethren, then our end is swift destruction, and when the judgment shall sit, then that trouble shall come to us, we see how careful we have to be, how very careful we have to watch the doctrines which are purported to be the doctrines of Jesus Christ; we have to weigh them, we have to give the answer, we have to give a defence and the establishment of the gospel; we have to be on our guard all the time, brethren, for these things.

We read in the 16th chapter of Romans verse 17, 'Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine with ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly (that is, their own sensual appetite, they desire to please themselves), and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple'. So, brethren and sisters, we see how careful we must be in the doctrines we put before the people, that they are according to the word of God.

In the 3rd verse of Philippians 3, Paul says concerning the Philippians, 'that they together with him and those of like precious faith, are the circumcision'. Here Paul was writing to Greeks, most of which, if not practically all of them, would be uncircumcised in the flesh. Paul says that **we are the circumcision**, and the token of that circumcision is that which is contained in verse 3, those who worship God in the spirit; not according to works of the flesh, and something which is revealed in flesh, but those who worship God in the spirit; those who rejoice in Jesus Anointed. To the Jews that was a stumbling block, to the Greeks that was foolishness, but those who rejoiced in the Anointed Jesus, that was a sign of their true spiritual circumcision. 'And those who have no confidence in the flesh', Paul says in Romans, 'the cutting off of the works of the flesh', that is true circumcision. 'He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, but one who is inwardly; circumcision not of the flesh but of the heart'. There is a cutting off of the works of the flesh, for they are things spiritually discerned by the heart; as Paul says in Colossians 2 verse 11, 'In whom (that is Jesus Christ) ye are circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Jesus Christ. So we brethren, are the true circumcision of Jesus Christ, if we worship God in spirit, and as John says, 'we must worship God in spirit; God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth'. We must rejoice in the Anointed Jesus, we must have no confidence in the flesh.

That last phrase particularly is that which Paul is now dealing with in this 3rd chapter. **No confidence in the flesh**, the spirit quickens, says John, but the flesh profits nothing'. So we have now in these next few verses, a comparison of those things which relate to Jesus Christ in the 2nd chapter. You know how we spoke of Jesus in the 2nd chapter, 'how being in the form of God, how those various gradations of Him decreased and

decreased till finally He was crucified upon the cross. There were 7 items, if you look back upon them in verses 7 and 8, you will find that first of all, He was of no reputation; secondly, He was a bond slave; thirdly, He was in the likeness of men (speaking of His Adamic condemnation); fourthly, He humbled Himself; fifthly, He was a servant who was obedient to the Word of God; sixthly, He was obedient unto death; and finally, obedient to the death of the cross. What does Paul say here? he gives us 7 externals of the flesh, things in which a man can boast about because these things I have and can do. These are the things that Paul as a Jew could boast in, what were they?

Firstly, circumcised the 8th day, a sign of a true-blooded Jew, here was a sign of the covenant in his flesh, identified amongst all the world, a man with a cutting in his flesh. But that was done to a child when he was 8 days old, how could he glory in that, when it was something done by his parents and not of himself? It was something which was an abasing of the flesh. Just because a person was circumcised did not give any indication of his faith either in God or Christ Jesus.

Secondly, he was of the stock of Israel, that holy nation, a separated people, and how the Jews boasted in that! and the Gentiles they were dogs. We, why we are Abraham's children, we've got the covenant, we've got the promise, we've got the law, we've got everything and we can boast in them. So Paul said he was circumcised the 8th day that gave him pride in being a Jew, but Jesus was of no reputation. See the contrast between these two, see the difference between the outward Jew that Paul could have boasted in, and the mind of Jesus Christ. The stock of Israel, a holy nation, born free, under bondage to no man but Jesus Christ was a bond slave under servitude for life. He didn't have his own will, but the will of someone else!

Thirdly, of the tribe of Benjamin, says Paul, and that to a Benjamite was a very proud thing indeed; my word how those words lifted up those men of Benjamin; it was a very small tribe but it was a very favoured tribe, the tribe of Benjamin because he was the favourite son together with Joseph of his father Jacob. He was the son of Rachel, born in the land and he was the only son that was born in the covenanted Land. He was the one whose name was changed from the 'son of sorrow' to the 'son of my right hand'. A wonderful privilege to be of the tribe of Benjamin; here was a tribe who was law to David, stuck by the throne of David through thick and thin, very proud to belong to the tribe of Benjamin. In this character of Benjamin was the temple of Jerusalem; there right in the territory of Benjamin was the temple, the priesthood and everything which related to it. This was the city of the great King, here was the city where all men came up to worship, in Benjamin. Saul was the first king, so Saul of Tarsus could have the vanity of the flesh in being called Saul, same name as king Saul of Benjamin. What of Jesus Christ? in the likeness of men, His Adamic condemnation, there was no boasting in flesh, but rather there was that humiliation; nothing to boast about in flesh brethren!

Fourthly, Paul says, I was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. By a Hebrew, born a Hebrew, here we see the purity of his descent, he could trace his line right back to a Hebrew of the Hebrews. What of Jesus Christ? He was a man who humbled Himself. Here we have a

slave who is in effect, as far as the Law is concerned, lost all those rights, but rather came then under the servitude of the Master and everything was passed over to Him.

Fifthly, Paul says he was a Pharisee. A Pharisee, as you know, was that strict sect in Israel who called themselves the Separatists; they were the very strict and separate people, and they worshipped God on street corners and they showed their separateness by their works. What of Jesus Christ? He was obedient to the Word, as to the streets of the Pharisees who were obedient to the traditions of the Law. They could boast about the traditions they knew and they could recite the traditions of the Law, but when they came to the spirit of the Law, they knew nothing. Jesus Christ was obedient to every Word of the Father.

Sixth, Paul says concerning zeal, I persecuted the ecclesia of God even unto death; and the very Law which he upheld, the law of Moses, condemned Paul because of that! here was a man who was a murderer! and he persecuted the ecclesia of God. Jesus Christ was obedient unto death; the very people that Paul was persecuting to death, were the very people who were in Christ Jesus, and when they put them to death, they were, in effect, putting Jesus Christ to death again! 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?' what they were doing to the brethren of Christ, they were doing to Christ.

Seventhly, finally as he says in that 6th verse, 'touching the righteousness which is in the law'. Here Paul has confirmed that of the righteousness which is in the law, he was blameless. But the Law couldn't legislate for faith, it couldn't lay down the terms of faith and say, do this, do that, do the other, you've got faith. They were things which were in the Spirit of the Law and whilst Paul could keep the Law perfectly, and answer everything in the Law, pay the offerings, pay the tithes, and whatsoever the LORD demanded of him and so he was blameless; here we see a man who said he could answer to every dictate of the Law, blameless he says, as we're going to find, these things Paul counted them as dung. He counted those things as sheer rubbish. They're worthless, brethren, that he might gain Christ Jesus,

In these 7 externals of flesh, Paul could have gloried; he did glory before he was turned about by Jesus Christ. Paul exalted himself in these things, and Paul was abased! Jesus Christ debased Himself and humbled Himself in things related in chapter 2, and because of them, brethren, God exalted Him, and there is a wonderful lesson in those things; these externals are things which are of the flesh; they are things which can never touch the heart. So Paul says concerning those things, 'those things were gain to me, those things I counted lost for Christ'. That word 'gain' (2771) is a plural word, it is the word 'gain', it's a word which means 'they will pause ethics, his stock and trade; these are the things that he could say, 'I can cap them up and they all belong to me; I own these and they're my ethics; they stand to the credit of my account!' It's like a ship's captain and these are the things which Paul is now speaking about, like a captain who goes from port to port and buys up things, goes away to sell the place and sells them for profit; they were his stock and trade. Those gains says Paul, I counted (and here we have the same word that we have in the 2nd chapter which speaks of Jesus counting

equality with God) 'I counted them or esteemed them as lost'. That word is in the singular, they were one great big loss, as far as Paul was concerned; wrap them all up and throw them overboard; they are one big loss! That in effect, brethren, is the term used here lost (2209), it is a term that is used in Acts 27 verse 10, where Paul on the way to Rome perceived when he spoke to the centurion, that this ship would suffer much damage'. That word 'damage' is the word 'lost' here. And so it was as that as that ship sailed along and ran into that storm, the great east wind Euroclydon would come and would all but destroy the boat at that time; they had to throw overboard the things that were not important, the cargo, all the lining of the ship, all the things that cluttered the ship, throw them over! because when life is involved, brethren, there are certain things that have to be thrown overboard that life may be preserved. In the time of Paul they threw overboard everything that they might have life, that they might live through that storm. The same thing applies to us as applied to Paul, Paul assets that he stuck and tried were things that he had to throw overboard where life was concerned. When we run into a storm, brethren, the storm of mortality, to go through that storm of life, there are things we must throw overboard, if we keep them we're sunk, we're lost and that storm of life will engulf us and we'll never get to the other side. I'll leave it to you, brethren, to determine those things; the externals of flesh, they are the things we take great pride in, they are the things we like to do, but as James says, 'they're sensual, earthly, and they're devilish', if they're not things relating to Jesus Christ.

Paul in this case quotes Jesus Christ, when we turn to the 16th chapter of Matthew and verse 26. We notice in verse 24 of this particular chapter that Jesus says, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me'. The cross was something before Jesus all His life, His life was one continual carrying of that cross. Then He goes on to say in verse 25, 'For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world' (there we have that same word 'gain' that we have in Philippians 3), if he shall gain the whole world and lose (the same word for 'loss') 'lose his own soul?' 'What's a man profited if he gain the whole world and yet loses or suffers the loss of his own soul?/. It's not worth it, brethren, is it? and the principle we have to take is to take up the cross, and Paul develops that as he goes on in Philippians 3, that is, the following after Jesus Christ in the pattern of His life, following every detail of His life that he might be conformable unto His death, so that in due time he might be partaker of His resurrection.

So in verse 8 of Philippians 3 he says, 'Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss (note these words) I count all things but loss, for the excelling knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.' All things are lost but for the excelling knowledge (the passing worth) of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, knowledge is so important, isn't it', brethren? knowledge of Jesus Christ is absolutely essential because we're throwing things overboard that we might have it. So Paul says, 'I count them as dung that I might win Christ', that word 'dung' (4657) as one writer says, 'are those things which are cast to dogs'. The Jews would have counted the Philippians as being dogs, but those things which a Jew would have boasted in, as Paul here speaks about, they are things which were dung, that is, cast to dogs, as Paul is showing and identifying the Judaisers themselves as being

dogs. 'So that I may gain Christ'. Like the ship's captain, he throws overboard things he doesn't need; things that will impede his life. When he gets to the port, he buys up further stock and trade. That's exactly what Paul did! that word 'win' (2770) is the same word as 'gain' that we had previously; he throws overboard everything that I might gain Christ. So Paul then goes about to the developing of 'gaining Jesus Christ'. He wants Jesus Christ so much as being his ethics, as being his stock and trade, as being his work. But it's a process, it isn't something that you can up and buy and pay for it, it is something that we have to chase after; it is something that we have to follow after and pursue it with all our life. So he says, 'that I might win Christ and to be found in Him'. Here we have a word which is like 'finding a treasure', what Paul wanted most of all was that when Jesus Christ came back that He would come and find Paul; He would come and seek him out because He wanted him; do you think Christ will come back and want to find us, brethren? do you think when Christ comes back, He will really want to come to us, whether we're in the dust of the ground or alive and really want to find us for His own? That's what Paul wanted, to be found in Him and to be part of the one true body of Christ; not having or clinging to my name, righteousness, which is of the Law, that counted nothing. That was a mere external of worship; a man could keep the Law in every detail, in that since, and offer every sacrifice required of him, such as Paul, but we have the case of the parents of John the Baptist. In the case of the parents of John the Baptist they might say, and the same with Paul, Paul had no faith whatever, and as the prophet Isaiah said, 'our righteousness, brethren, is as filthy rags, we have nothing of ourselves, to commend ourselves to God'.

'That I might know Him', says Paul in verse 10, did Paul know Jesus Christ? if Paul did know Him, this word this word 'ginosko' (1097) is a word which means 'to fully know, to have full experience of Him', and whilst Paul knew Him yet he wanted to know Him further; and here I believe, we have the idea that Paul wants to know Him in the sense of being involved in His spirit nature, that when the kingdom should come, Paul would be found to be in Him, that then he would fully know Him and become substantial with Him. 'This is life eternal', says John, that we might know Thee (ginosko) the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' Knowledge and the fullness of knowledge is involved in eternal life. The power of His resurrection, says Paul, that's something else which I want to be associated with. Jesus Christ was raised for our justification. Involved in resurrection is the exclusion of all flesh; it's a rising again to a newness of life and here we see the mind is involved. The mind has to go along the paths of righteousness, the new way of life, that new creature in Christ Jesus. He was raised for the forgiveness of our sins, raised for our justification, He was raised that the covenants of promise might be sealed.

Then he says in verse 10, 'That I might know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings'. Here again, that word 'fellowship' (2842) active participation, here we find that partnership, everyone working together, the fellowship of His sufferings. There's a wonderful note in this, brethren, it could be developed undoubtedly, the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and they are the things that we have to be involved in. We find that the purpose of suffering was to make the Captain of our salvation perfect; there were 1260 days given to Jesus Christ in which to perfect His

life. In a sense, it brings to a fullness the very name of Yahweh - 3 1/2 years, 1260 days given to the Son of man. When in the 40 days of temptation, He was driven by the Spirit in the wilderness 40 days but there were 1260 days of temptation, brethren, and when we turn to Hebrews 2, we find that this chapter details the purpose and reason for Christ's sufferings. 'What is man, he says in verse 6, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him? Made a little lower than the angels, verse 9, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man'. There's the purpose of His mortality, made perfect through sufferings; made flesh and blood that He might destroy the power of the diabolos and deliver those persons who all their lifetime were subject to bondage.

Verse 17, 'Made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest'. Verse 18, 'In that He Himself suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted'. The final suffering of Jesus Christ, brethren, came when He was presented before the multitude alongside one, Barabbas, and as one bible version says, 'his name was Jesus', that may be disputed. It is true we have here Jesus and we Jesus the son of God. Barabbas means 'the son of a father' (912) and Jesus Christ was **the son of THE**

Father. Here was the son of a father and the son of THE Father, 'choose you this day, Israel, whom you will serve! Who do you want? and they chose Barabbas, and so Paul can say in Romans 8 verse 18, 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Also in 1 Peter 4 verse 1, 'forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind'. We have been stressing that mind, brethren, if Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, and when we do that, we shall find that we shall follow the pattern of Paul in this 3 chapter of Philippians verse 10, 'that we might be conformable unto His death'.

Here is a word which is related to that word 'form' summorphos' (4832), that we might be shaped or fashioned in His death. Literally, it means, 'growing into conformity'; it's a process, brethren, something we do day by day, it's a fashioning, it's a shaping and a moulding of us, in which our character is fashioned and moulded as we grow in conformity with the death of Jesus Christ. So he says, 'If by any means I might obtain to the resurrection of the dead'. Can't we see the urgency in the mind of Paul? 'If by any means I might obtain, or come to, or arrive at, the resurrection of the dead', and here we have a word which occurs only once in the scriptures, this word 'resurrection'(1815), it is 'exanastasia', resurrection out of dead ones, and what Paul wanted, brethren, was in the resurrection of the dead to be taken out of those dead ones whom Christ would have for himself.

So he says in verse 12, 'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after', now that word 'follow after' they are the same word in the Greek as we have for in verse 6, 'persecuting'(1377), with relentless pursual Paul persecuted the ecclesia of God. With the same mind, but turned around in a different way, he now becomes a pursuer, relentlessly pursuing after Jesus Christ, that I might apprehend Him in that He has apprehended me. Paul was apprehended by Jesus

Christ on the road to Damascus; he was turned about from the persecution of the ecclesia, now with the same zeal and relentless pursuit, brethren, he came after Jesus Christ. He said, 'I count myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind (the things of the flesh, the things that relate to this Adamic constitution; forgetting about those, leaving them right behind; I've a goal in view, something to pursue) forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I **press**, and that word 'press' is the same word as 'persecuting' and 'following after'. The same relentless pursuit by Paul. 'I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus'. That word '**prize**' brethren, is a word which means 'something which is awarded to a person by an umpire or by an arbitrator' (1017) and these things which are shown here are things which relate to the Olympic games; we find there are a number of phrases used in this chapter relating to that. So Paul, if he reaches the mark, then the umpire or the arbitrator will give him the prize! We're in the same category, brethren, in 1 Corinthians 9 verses 24 to 27 show unto us.

So in verses 15 to 21, Paul then deals with the brethren at Philippi. He says concerning the things that were to him gain, but were mere externals of flesh, things he had tossed overboard, things which he had now taken to himself. So he says, 'As many of us who be perfect or matured be thus minded', let us have the same mind, let us walk by the same **rule**, and that word 'rule' brethren, is a measurement of length used by the Olympic game officials to measure out a distance (2583), a certain set distance, let us walk by that rule by that standard and that standard is in Christ Jesus; at the end of that distance is our goal and our prize, Christ Jesus our Lord.

So we come down to verse 20 and we see there 'our conversation or our citizenship is in the heavenlies; from which also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ'. The 'Saviour' was a term given to the Caesars, a term which the people of Ephesus gave to the Caesar and said that he was the general saviour of the world. Paul says our citizenship is in the heavenlies; whilst I might be in Rome and you in Philippi, a colony of Rome, yet our citizenship is elevated above that and we look for a Saviour, not an earthly saviour, we look for one from heaven. 'He shall change our vile bodies that it might be likened or fashioned unto His glorious body'. So there's that changing, that word **vile** means 'humble'(5014); our humble bodies, the bodies of flesh, He will change them that they might be **fashioned** or conformed unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.'

So in chapter 4 briefly, brethren, we find that there is, first of all, two sisters; and Paul directs this true yolk fellow who apparently seems to be Epaphroditus, and here we can take a lesson, when animals were yoked together, they had to be the same type of animals; animals that would work together, not an ass and another animal, they had to be the same. Epaphroditus was like that, Paul could call him 'my yolk fellow; the two sisters, Paul says, 'that they be of the same mind in the Lord'. Notice in verse 3, that they were those who had laboured with Paul. Here were two sisters who had given themselves totally over to the preaching of the gospel with Paul, who had helped him and worked with him, but they couldn't work together. How true that is of many of us in

the ecclesia brethren, we can all come together to our ecclesial meetings; we can all come together to the works, but isn't it so obvious at times, that there are two people who just cannot get together; they don't talk to each other, they have no subject one with the other, yet their apparency is obvious! Paul says, 'let them be of the same mind', if you want to be exalted, forget about the externals of flesh, and worry about the things which relate to the spirit, If we can't come together on the basis of the mind of Christ, we cannot come together in the kingdom, because it is on the basis of the mind of Jesus Christ that we are taken into the kingdom. So he says concerning Clement, 'fellow labourers whose names are in the book of life'. There is a book of life, brethren, where those whom God wants for Himself are written, and mark you, that our name can be taken out of the book of life, as Psalm 69 verse 28 says, 'let men be blotted out of the book of the living and not be written with the righteous'. The writer of the Revelation says in chapter 3 verse 5, 'he that overcometh, I will not blot his name out of the book of life'; these are the words of Jesus Christ, if we overcome, brethren, then He will not blot our names out of the book of Christ.

So going through that last chapter, we noted that there were certain exhortations by Paul to the brethren: Let your moderation be known to all men, for Yahweh is nigh', and those words Yahweh is nigh are taken from the psalms, Psalm 145 verse 18, 'Let your moderation'(1933), does that mean to say that we can do things moderately? that we can even indulge in certain doubtful issues moderately? the word doesn't mean that, brethren, it's a word which means 'consideration', let your consideration for others be named to all men, let them see in you, let them see in you forbearance as the word is translated, your gentleness. what manner of men you are, because God is nigh, God is near us, God can behold these things and He searches the heart of each one of us, and He knows us!

Verse 6, 'Be careful for nothing, but in everything', brethren, by prayer by supplication and request; the 3 stages or the 3 applications of prayer to God, let our requests be known to God; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding, passeth all the minds of men, they can't appreciate this, it's something which they can't fathom, 'shall **keep** your hearts and minds'. The word means 'to keep guard' (5432) over your heart and mind and thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Finally brethren, verse 8, and here we notice 8 things which Paul puts before the ecclesia at Philippi he refers to them as the perfection of flesh manifest. He had shown to them the perfection of the man of the spirit and now he gives up the 8 things, those things which will take us into the kingdom. Those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtue and praise; think on these things. Here's our mind coming into play again, brethren; think on these things, let our minds dwell these things. Think upon them and what are they? those things, he says in verse 9, 'those things which ye both have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do!' They had a living witness of those things in the apostle Paul; they had learned it from him, they had received it from him, and they had heard them from him and had seen them worked out in his life. If we do those things, then the peace of God shall be with us.

So (I must hurry brethren) he speaks concerning the gift he had received from the brethren and he called them in effect, in this last chapter, (we've dwelt on our first occasion) that

he didn't really need those things. He had no need for the things that they were sending to him, but he would accept them because of the heart that went with it. He says in verse 12, 'I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where and in all things I am instructed or I have learnt the secret both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. For he says in verse 11, 'For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content'. I have learned that no matter what state I am found to be in, therewith to be content and Paul was writing from Rome in chains. As he says in verse 13, which we've had repeated to us during the school, 'I can do all things, I can do all things through Christ or in Christ, who strengthens me'.

So passing down, brethren, to the final verse of that chapter, we often pass over this phrase, and we sort of feel that Paul has a nice thought and is presenting this to the ecclesia to whom he wrote. He says, 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen'. The epistle opened on the aspect of grace, the favour that was displayed to Paul, now he prays, that the grace or favour of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. You know, brethren, it is essential that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us, it's essential that His favour be toward us because grace is the divine favour which reveals the aspect of the divine face. When the divine face shone upon Israel then they were blessed, and as the prayer which we have in the book of Numbers, where they prayed every day that God's grace would shine upon them. 'be gracious unto us, and give us peace'. The aspect of the divine face meant favour toward the nation of Israel; the 1st chapter of Isaiah speaks of God hiding His eyes or turning His face away from them. The divine favour was taken away, no longer was Israel in favour with God, no longer was the divine grace toward them. When we go through this matter of grace, brethren, we realize that through the divine grace, eternal life is involved for without divine grace there would be no forgiveness of sins; without divine grace there could be no eternal life, if the grace of God be with us. Let us by the actions which are revealed in this particular epistle go before us, brethren, because if we follow in the pattern of Paul, follow in the pattern of Jesus Christ, of Timothy, Epaphroditus and above all let me mention Luke who went with them and who had much to do, I believe, with the brethren at Philippi. If we follow them in their pattern then assuredly the grace of God will go with us, from this day forward.