

BIBLE STUDY II

Practical Bible Study II: Syllabus

Notes

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CLASS #1:

I. Section #1: Phil 2:19-30.

CLASS #2:

I. Section #1. (cont.)

II. Section #2: Phil 3:1-4:9.

CLASS #3:

II. Section #2. (cont.)

CLASS #4:

II. Section #2. (cont.)

III. Section #3: Phil 4:10-20.

CLASS #5:

III. Section #3. (cont.)

IV. Section #4: Phil 4:21-23.

Exam

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Practical Bible Study II: Exam

The “Inductive Bible Study” courses do not have exams like the other courses. The exam time is used to actually do inductive Bible study.

In the second “Practical Bible Study” course, the exam requires making observations and interpretations. The student is given a passage from the Bible and must use the exam time to study the passage and form observations, interpretive questions, and interpretive answers. The student is required to submit their five most important observations and interpretive questions. Two of the observation/question combinations must include an interpretive answer. The observations, questions, and answers are graded according to importance, insight, clarity, etc.

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Course Introduction:

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Prerequisites: Introduction to Bible Study and Practical Bible Study I.

This is the second course in the practical bible study series. The series is based on an understanding of the materials that were taught in the Introduction course.

We will use our foundational understanding of bible study to study the book of Philippians. Already we have made observations in the book of Philippians and we have offered an introduction to the book.

Format of this Course.

We will study Philippians 2:19-4:23. We will divide the course into four sections according to the eight section outline of the book that we developed in the Introduction course.

Each section will contain five areas of study:

- 1) A short introduction.
- 2) Word study (using Wuest's Word Studies' and other Greek reference aids).
- 3) Study of the structure (this will include the process that leads us from observation to interpretation to application).
- 4) An outline of the structure (we will summarize the flow of the relationships between the parts of each section).
- 5) A conclusion (this will include a one sentence summary description of the passage and a three or four word title that captures the focus of the passage).

Note: We will use the New American Standard Bible version in our study.

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I. Section #1 (Phil 2:19-30).

A. Introduction to Section #1.

1. In the previous section Paul gave the Philippians a series of instructive challenges. He wrote of his personal concern for them. He expressed his desire to know about their status in Christ.
2. In this context he begins to explain that he will send Timothy and Epaphroditus to them.

B. Word Study of Section #1.

1. Trust (vs. 24) - means persuade (perfect tense); thus: “I am convinced.”
2. Brother (vs. 25) - means from the same womb or origin; on the same level. Paul, in his humility, puts the Philippian messenger on his own level.
3. Fellow worker/soldier (vs. 25) - means for Paul, a worker is a soldier.
4. Distressed (vs. 26) - means a restless state of mind that is produced by grief. The only other times that this term is used (Mt 26:37; Mk 14:33) is in reference to the emotion of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. Epaphroditus has this strong emotion because he knew that others were worried about him.
5. Risked (vs. 30) - means to gamble; to expose yourself to danger. In his ministry to Paul, Epaphroditus exhibited the attitude of the love that is spoken of in Jn 15:13.

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C. Study of the Structure of Section #1.

Notes —

1. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

a. Observation and Interpretation.

1) This passage can be divided into three parts.

- a) Paul hopes to send Timothy (vs. 19-23).
- b) Paul hopes that he himself will be able to go (vs. 24).
- c) Paul sends Epaphroditus (vs. 25-30).

Interpretive Question

Why does Paul want to send Timothy?

2) Paul answers this with the words **“SO THAT”** in vs. 19.

- a) Paul wants to know the condition of the Philippians (see 1:27 and 2:12). He is sending Timothy as a reporter. He will report back to Paul (note the words “when I learn”).
- b) Paul is not sending Timothy to be the Pastor of the local church that is already planted. Timothy is not sent to govern the local church. He will go to observe and to encourage. It is a specific mission with a specific purpose. Furthermore, there is no sense of permanence with regard to the amount of time that he will stay there. It is a visit.

Interpretive Question

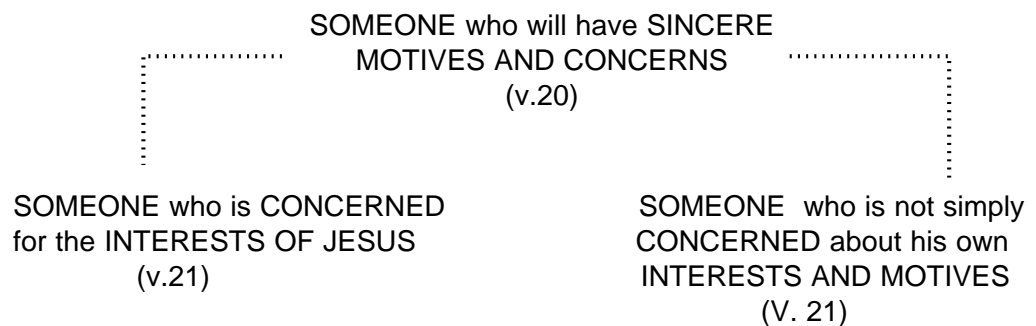
Why does Paul send Timothy specifically?

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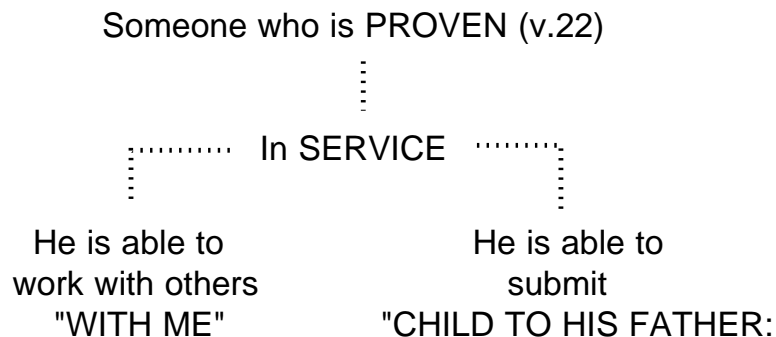
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3) Paul introduces the answer to this question with the word **“FOR”** in vs. 20.

a) Because he has confidence in no one else (vs. 20, 21). Paul selects someone who is like himself (“of kindred spirit”).



b) Because Timothy has **“PROVEN WORTH.”** Paul realizes that he must send someone who is worthy to be sent.



Interpretive Question

When will Timothy be sent?

4) Paul says **“IMMEDIATELY”** (vs. 23). However, this depends on Paul’s circumstances.

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Interpretive Question

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Does this mean that Paul does not think that he himself will visit them?

- 5) No! Paul actually says that he is convinced (see word study) that he will come soon. The word “**AND**” in vs. 24 connects the proposed visits of Timothy and Paul.
 - a) Here we have a lesson in faith. It is not a denial of faith to do something in addition to what is the anticipated action.
 - b) If Paul believes that he will visit them soon, then why does he want to send Timothy to get information? Yes, Paul has faith that he will visit them. But that does not mean that he cannot send someone else to get information now. Moving toward a goal through one method while **WAITING** in faith to move toward that same goal through a different method does **NOT NECESSARILY** signify a lack of faith or a denial of faith (study 1:25-27).
- b. Application.
 - 1) Do we send missionaries to govern the local church that is already planted? Do we go as visitors on a specific mission who will give and then leave? Or do we go as owners who are not needed but who want to satisfy their own ministries?
 - 2) Do we send those who are proven? Do those who are sent go to build their own kingdom or the kingdom of God? Do missionaries respond to real needs? Do they have **a mission** (specific and therefore effective and efficient)? Or are they simply **doing missions** (general and therefore ineffective and inefficient)?

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- 3) Are you included in the ALL that are so busy seeking after their own interests that they do not have time or interest in missions work? Perhaps there were 1000 Christians in Rome. Only one was willing to go. This resulted in a strong rebuke from Paul. Do you think that Paul would rebuke us today for the same ratio of those who are willing to go? For example, in the United States there are an estimated 50,000,000 Christians. However, the United States only sends 50,000 missionaries.
- 4) Do you have the type of faith that does not allow you to move toward the goal because that action might be considered a denial of faith? Or does your faith have the ability to wait and to act at the same time?

Discussion Point

Do you refuse to take medicine or go to the doctor because you do not want to “deny” your faith in divine healing? Or does your faith walk and act by believing in healing but also allowing the use of medical help?

Discuss other practical ways in which this understanding of faith may affect our lives.

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2. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

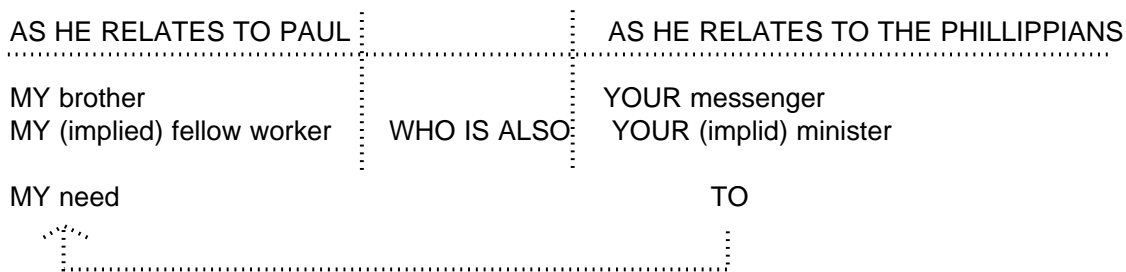
a. Observation and Interpretation.

- 1) Paul hopes to go to Philippi himself. At least, he hopes to send Timothy. For now, he will definitely send Epaphroditus.

Interpretive Question

Who Is Epaphroditus?

- 2) He is related to **Paul** and to the **Philippians** (study the diagram of the structure of vs. 25). The diagram shows that Epaphroditus is:
 - a) A messenger/minister from **Philippi**.
 - b) Who is ministering to the needs of **Paul**.



- 3) Paul is returning to the Philippians the one whom they sent to him.
 - a) Again, we see that they are selective in who they send as their “missionary.” Epaphroditus is obviously a strong man of God.
 - b) Paul describes Epaphroditus as being on an equal level with him. He calls him a **FELLOW WORKER AND SOLDIER**.

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Interpretive Question

Why Does Paul Send Epaphroditus Back?

- 4) Paul gives three reasons for sending him back.
 - a) The first reason is introduced by the word **“BECAUSE”** in vs. 26. Epaphroditus returned because **“HE WAS LONGING”** for the Philippians. He was distressed to think that the Philippians were upset about his illness. Here we see the pure love and concern that Epaphroditus had for his people. Paul does not abhor this and say that as a missionary Epaphroditus should not be concerned about his homeland. Instead, he treats Epaphroditus’ love for his people with respect and honor and views it as a reason for the missionary to leave.
 - b) The second reason is introduced by the words **“IN ORDER THAT”** in vs. 28. God healed Epaphroditus. Paul has a genuine desire to share the joy with the Philippians. He is concerned that they rejoice and not worry.
 - c) The third reason is a continuation of the second reason. In vs. 28 Paul says **“AND (IN ORDER THAT) I MAY BE LESS CONCERNED.”** Paul, like Epaphroditus, is concerned that the Philippians are worried. He loves Epaphroditus (note his words “lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow” in vs. 27). Epaphroditus ministers to Paul’s **“NEED”** and is a benefit to him. Yet he is willing to send him back for the sake of others. In this way, Paul exhibits the attitude of Christ that he previously wrote about. He gives preference to others and views their **“NEEDS”** as being more important than his own.

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- 5) Paul then gives instructions on how the Philippians should receive Epaphroditus:
- a) With joy.
 - b) By showing him honor.

Interpretive Question

Why Should The Phillipians Receive Epaphroditus With Honor?

- 6) Paul answers this question very clearly when he uses the word **“BECAUSE”** in vs. 30.
- a) Because he gave himself for the cause of the gospel. He risked his life in the ministry of the gospel.
 - b) Paul does not have the attitude that the sickness should be viewed in a negative way. Instead, he says that Epaphroditus should be honored because of his sickness. Should we all try to get sick then? As Paul would say, “May it never be.” This is not the point. It is not that sickness itself is a positive thing. It is only that health, like everything else, is subordinate in importance and value to the Lordship of Christ. If the expense of following and serving Christ is the loss of health, then we must be willing to pay the price.

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Discussion Point

Some modern Christians would disagree with this interpretation. But they would also have to disagree with Paul. Paul does not enter into a long discourse here on how divine health is for us to claim. He does not say that Epaphroditus had a lack of faith. He does not argue that the sickness should not have happened. He does not look at it negatively. He looks at it positively. Why? Because for Paul, physical hardship was a possible consequence of following Christ (see 4:12; 1 Cor 4:11-13; 2 Cor 11:23-27; 2 Cor 6:3-5). The positive reaction is not because of the sickness. It is because of what the sickness represented. It represented total commitment and dedication to Christ. Paul could speak like this because he did not have a theology that put physical health on the same level with salvation. Salvation, and therefore the Lordship of Christ, stood far above any circumstances. Promote discussion concerning these conclusions.

- c) We might also note here that Paul's theology on divine healing seems to focus more on the sovereignty of God than on the "rights" and "claims" that he has as a Christian. His point is that God had mercy on Epaphroditus (vs. 27). Furthermore, the word "lest" implies that Paul understood that there was a possibility that the healing would not occur. Yes, Paul believed in and practiced divine healing. He had faith for it. But his faith was pure and deep enough that he could still allow God to be sovereign.
- b. Application.
 - 1) Are you willing to release a minister who is helping your ministry so that he can be a blessing to another ministry? Is your need overshadowed by the needs of others? Or does your selfishness only allow you to see your own needs?
 - 2) Can you believe for healing while still leaving room for a positive view of sickness and for the sovereignty of God. Could you honor someone for being sick? Or does your theological view make it impossible to follow Paul's instructions? Do you understand divine healing as being under the sovereignty, grace, and "mercy" of God (see vs. 27)? Or do you see it as an inalienable "right" belonging to Christians who can "command" God to heal?

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- 3) Are you more concerned about your health than you are about giving everything for the cause of Christ? What about your health? What about your life? If Paul had a perspective that put health on the same level as the Lordship of Christ then he would have chastised Epaphroditus for being sick (as some teachings would do today, and as the teaching of Job's comforters did thousands of years ago). Instead, Paul honored Epaphroditus. For Paul, giving all to Christ is more important than physical health. Health is subordinate to the Lordship of Christ. Can you say that?
- 4) Can you say with Paul that you are willing to suffer hardship, beatings, hunger, thirst, sickness, and even death for the cause of Christ?

Discussion Point

Use the following questions and references to aspects of certain "popular" teachings to promote class discussion.

Remember that the example we have is not one of claiming rights but of laying down rights for the cause of others and for the glory of God. Yes, Paul does believe in divine healing. However, his teaching is balanced.

D. An Outline of the Structure of Section #1.

1. Paul hopes to send Timothy (vs. 19-23).
 - a) In order to get a report (vs. 19).
 - b) The reason for sending Timothy specifically (vs. 20-22).
 - 1) Confidence in no one else (vs. 20, 21).
 - 2) Proven worth (vs. 22).
 - c) When he will be sent (vs. 23).

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2. Paul hopes that he himself will come shortly (vs. 24).
3. Paul sends Epaphroditus now (vs. 25-30).
 - a) Identity of Epaphroditus (vs. 25).
 - b) Reasons to send him (vs. 26-28).
 - 1) Epaphroditus is concerned about the Philippians (vs. 26).
 - 2) Paul wants to share the joy with the Philippians (vs. 28).
 - 3) Paul is concerned about the Philippians (vs. 28).
 - c) Instructions to receive him with honor (vs. 29, 30).
 - 1) The instruction is given (vs. 29).
 - 2) The reason for the instruction (vs. 30).

Author's Comment:

Using the outline, challenge the students to identify relationships between parts (purpose, explanation, conclusion, transition, reason).

E. Conclusion to Section #1.

1. Summary sentence. Paul repeats his belief that he will soon visit the Philippians and he also explains when and why he will send Timothy and Epaphroditus.
2. Title. Paul sends others.

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II. Section #2 (Phil 3:1-4:9).

Notes —

A. Introduction to Section #2.

1. Paul moves into the conclusion of the letter. It is actually a double conclusion (note the use of the word “finally” in 3:1 as well as in 4:8).
2. Paul gives final instructions and challenges. He focuses on warning the Philippians against impostors.

B. Word Study of Section #2.

1. Rejoice in the Lord (3:1) - as opposed to rejoicing in man (see Gal 6:12). Paul is leading into his warning against the Judaizers who wanted to rejoice in the Law and in man’s accomplishments.
2. Beware (vs. 2) - means continually be alert with a view toward avoiding.
3. Dogs (vs. 2) - the Jews considered dogs that roamed the streets and ate the garbage as the most despised animals. Perhaps the picture here is of Judaizers who prowl around the Christian congregations trying to win converts to legalistic Judaism.
4. Worship (vs. 3) - means to serve, to minister; specifically used to describe the service to God by the Jewish people. Thus, Paul is being very direct in his point. He uses the term dog which the Jews used to refer to the Gentiles. He uses the term circumcision which was a Jewish rite. He uses the Jewish term “worship.” All of this to emphasize the great “change” that has taken place in God’s redemptive plan (the inclusion of the Gentiles) and to warn against those who do not accept that change.
5. All things (vs. 8) - probably includes much wealth. To be a citizen of Tarsus at that time (which Paul was) he would be from a family of wealth and reputation. Certainly when we consider the implications of Paul’s education and status in Judaism, it is not difficult to imagine the money, reputation and position that he sacrificed to become poor and despised missionary.

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6. Be found (vs. 9) - means a revelation of character as seen by others.
7. Perfect (vs. 12) - means spiritually mature (not sinless).
8. Forgetting (vs. 13) - means completely forgetting; as a runner forgets about those who are behind him in the race so that he is not distracted.
9. Reaching (vs. 13) - means to stretch oneself toward a goal. This is another athletic term that was used to describe a runner who is stretching toward the finish line with his eyes firmly fixed on it.
10. Toward (vs. 14) - means down; bearing down upon the goal. Again the runner analogy continues. This is a descriptive term of the intensity of the runner as he strives toward the goal.
11. Perfect (vs. 15) - here it is used as a noun (in vs. 12 Paul used the verb to say that there was still room to grow; the process was not complete). Here the noun is used to give a relative description (those who are mature as opposed to those who are not mature).
12. Conformity (vs. 21) - means the change of outward form and inward substance.
13. Exertion (vs. 21) - means super human energy or working.
14. Euodia (4:2) - the name means “prosperous journey” or “successful.”
15. Syntyche (vs. 2) - the name means “pleasant acquaintance”; to “meet with someone.” The conflict between these two may have been a conflict that was consistent with the meaning of their names. The task oriented leader (“successful”) against the people oriented leader (“pleasant acquaintance”).

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16. True comrade (vs. 3) - it is probably a proper name (note that it is singular; “you” is also singular). Paul says “I ask you (singular) also” as he continues his personal requests of individuals. The name literally means “true yokefellow” (one who pulls with someone else). Paul makes his request of a person who works in unity with others. He wants this person to help the others to learn how to do this. Paul was a great leader. He knew how to delegate authority. As an apostle (Eph 4:11) he knew how to “equip the saints” (literally “to put parts together effectively”).
17. Ask (vs. 3) - means to request with authority. In vs .2 Paul uses the term “urge” which does not include authority and is less direct. It means to beg or to beseech. Here we can see the sensitivity and diplomacy of the wise apostle. Paul uses tact with those who are out of fellowship with each other. He is careful with them and moves slowly to reconcile them. This is part of the skill of peacemaking. Also notice that Paul does not confront them suddenly or aggressively. He introduces his instructions first to the whole group. Here in 4:1-3 Paul says to “stand firm” and speaks of the women who “shared my struggle.” These same instructions were first given to the whole group in 1:27. Also note that Paul remains neutral with respect to the disagreements between the two women. He asks someone to intervene who is closer to the situation and who is better informed.
18. Shared my struggle (vs. 3) - means to depict a team of athletes who play together in pursuit of a common goal. Paul encourages the two women to live in “harmony” and then reminds them of the days when they were in harmony. Paul ministered with others under a plurality of leadership. He worked in an “apostolic team.”
19. Forbearing (vs. 5) - means to be satisfied with less than you deserve; a humble and patient steadfastness which can submit to injustice without reacting in hatred. It trusts in the sovereignty of God.
20. Anxious (vs. 6) - means to worry; to be troubled. Mostly, Paul uses this term in a negative context. However, it is used also in a positive sense. It seems that the difference depends on the object of worry. Anxiety or concern for others can be a great motivator. And so we see the same Greek word in Phil 2:20, 1 Cor 12:25, and 2 Cor 11:28. The positive use of the word also seems to focus on action (concern leads to action). The negative use of the word focuses on a lack of action. It focuses on thoughts that lead to worry.

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21. Supplication (vs. 6) - means request for your personal needs.

22. Guard (vs. 7) - means a military term that was used to describe the job of soldiers who stood guard inside of the city gates. They controlled what went out of the city. The peace of God does not depend on outside circumstances. It is within us. The peace of God is like a guard on the inside that controls what goes out. It does not allow to exit those words, thoughts, and actions that would produce worry.

23. Honorable (vs. 8) - means majestic; worthy of respect; something that inspires awe.

C. Study of the Structure of Section #2.

1. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

a. Observation and Interpretation.

1) We can divide this section into five parts:

a) A general challenge (3:1).

b) Warnings (3:2-4:1).

c) A plea for unity (4:2, 3).

d) A repeated challenge to rejoice (4:4-7).

e) A concluding instruction or challenge (4:8, 9).

2) The obvious emphasis is put on part two (warnings).

3) In part one Paul repeats the general challenge of the letter. This also serves as an introduction to the warnings in part two.

4) Paul says that his challenge **“IS A SAFEGUARD FOR YOU.”**

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Interpretive Question

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Who Will They Be Safeguarded Against?

- 5) In vs. 2 Paul answers this question when he warns **“BEWARE OF”**:
- a) The dogs.
 - b) The evil workers.
 - c) The false circumcision.
- 6) More specifically, they must beware of those who put confidence in the flesh (vs. 3). Paul would not use the term **“DOGS”** to refer to Gentiles. He possibly uses it to refer to the Jews in an attempt to make a stronger rebuke by using the Jews own term (see word study). Also the idea of **“CIRCUMCISION”** could be used in the same way and for the same reason.
- a) The Judaizers were putting confidence in the flesh (see word study). Paul is warning the Philippians about the mixed gospel of the Judaizers.
 - b) It was actually a different gospel. Thus, Paul is very strong in his attitude towards this problem (see Gal 1:8, 9).

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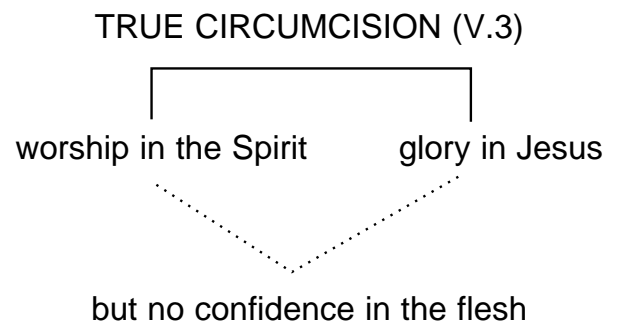
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Interpretive Question

What Does “False Circumcision” Mean?

- 7) Paul provides a contrast in order to answer this question.
- a) Study the following diagram of the structure.

False Circumcision (v.2)



- b) If “**TRUE**” circumcision puts no confidence in the flesh then FALSE circumcision “**PUTS CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH.**”

Interpretive Question

What Does It Mean To Put Confidence In The Flesh?

- 8) We can answer this question by observing a repetition in vs. 4-6 where Paul gives a list of reasons why he could easily put confidence in the flesh. The term “law” is repeated in Paul’s list. References to the “**LAW**” are also repeated.
- a) Confidence in the flesh - means confidence in yourself through the “**LAW.**”
- b) This is stated more clearly in vs. 9 when Paul says: “not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law.”

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b. Application.

- 1) Do you have **“FALSE CIRCUMCISION”** in you? Do you glory and put confidence in the flesh? Do you trust in yourself and in your own abilities? Do you receive salvation from God freely through faith? Or do you try to earn it through your good works in order to feel good about yourself?
- 2) Do you receive forgiveness for a sin through faith? Do you then respond to God with thanksgiving in a continued relationship with Him that results in Him doing good works through you? Or do you first try to feel good about yourself by paying for your sin with good works? Do you forgive yourself by your works or do you allow God to forgive you by his grace?

2. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

a. Observation and Interpretation.

- 1) In 3:1 Paul gives a general challenge that also serves as an introduction to the warnings against the **“FALSE CIRCUMCISION.”** This is contrasted with the **“TRUE CIRCUMCISION.”**

Interpretive Question

What Does It Mean To Be Of The True Circumcision?

- 2) Those of the true circumcision put no confidence in the flesh (vs. 3).

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- 3) They give up confidence in the flesh in order to gain Christ (vs. 7). They trade one thing for another.
 - a) For Paul, this trade was not an equal trade. It was far more valuable to gain Christ than to keep the flesh. We might could compare this trade to a trade that gets a famous national sports player for a high school sports player. It was a great trade!
 - b) Study the following diagram of the structure of vs. 9. It will show the nature of the trade.

SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS	traded for	GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS
THE LAW	traded for	FAITH

Interpretive Question

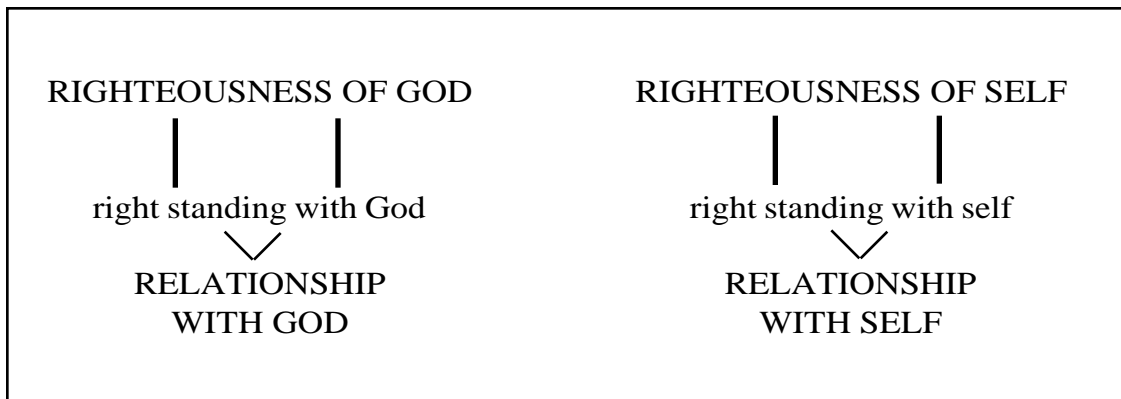
Why Does Paul Want To Make This Trade?

- 4) Paul answers this in vs. 10 with the words **“THAT I MAY KNOW”** (experiential knowledge). He hinted of this purpose earlier in:
 - a) vs. 8 (“in view of knowing Christ”).
 - b) vs. 9 (“may be found in Him”).
- 5) However, now in vs. 10 Paul is more emphatic and specific. His purpose is to:
 - a) Know “Him.”
 - b) Know “the power of His resurrection.”
 - c) Know “the fellowship (sharing) of His sufferings.”

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- 6) Paul will make this trade to gain **“RELATIONSHIP”** with God. Consider the following diagram.

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Interpretive Question

How Will Paul Be Able To Accomplish His Purpose?

- 7) Paul uses the participle **“BEING”** to answer this question.
- a) “Being conformed to His death, Paul will know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings.”
 - b) Death to self is the method. It was Jesus method and now it must be Paul’s method also.
- 8) Jesus died to Himself (2:7) and died on the cross (2:8). When He did this:
- a) He regained a perfect relationship with the Father when He was seated at His right hand (“know Him”).
 - b) He was resurrected (“know the power of His resurrection”).
 - c) He suffered (“know the fellowship of His sufferings”).

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- 9) Yes! The cross was for Jesus and is now for Paul the one and only method. The existence of a method implies the hope for a result.

Interpretive Question

What Will Be The Result Of All Of This?

- 10) Paul introduces the answer in vs. 11 with the words “in order that.”
- a) The Greek is actually “**IF PERHAPS.**” This implies a desired or hoped for result in sight.
 - b) The desired result is “**THE RESURRECTION**” (the greek term “exanastasis” instead of the greek term anastasis in vs. 10) “**FROM THE DEAD.**” It is to have eternal life. As we will see in vs. 12, it is to become perfect.
 - c) Paul may be doing two things here. First, he is taking the opportunity to emphasize the theological connection between death and life. He is saying that in order to live one must die. That is, the resurrection is preceded by the cross. The cross is the method. The resurrection is the result. Second, he uses the opportunity to refer to the resurrection as something that can be attained now (this would be consistent with the use of EXanastasis in vs. 11 and with the meaning of “perfect” in vs. 12). Indeed eternal life is a current possibility since it is a current possibility to know God (Jn 17:3). Thus, he refers to the ultimate fulfillment of the resurrection as well as to the current possibility. This is consistent with the “already/not yet” theology of the kingdom of God.

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Interpretive Question

Has Paul Obtained It Yet?

- 11) No! He says in vs. 12, “not that I have already obtained it.”

Interpretive Question

Does He Quit?

- 12) No! He says, “**BUT I PRESS ON.**” Paul has a **healthy attitude**. He can accept and admit that he needs to improve. He also moves ahead toward the improvement. Paul can say:
- a) I have not yet obtained it.
 - b) I will move forward.
- 13) His having not obtained it does not discourage him from moving forward. His moving forward does not keep him from admitting his lack. This is a **healthy attitude**.
- a) The perspective of this attitude is to look ahead and to forget what is behind (vs. 13).
 - b) The imagery (as seen in the Greek terms) of this attitude is that of a runner who bears down and is intent on the goal, but is not overwhelmed by his distance from it. At the same time he does not fall into a false confidence because of a lack of realization or acceptance that he is not yet there.
 - c) It may be helpful here to study some other uses of the race analogy (1 Cor 9:24-27; 1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7, 8; Heb 12:1; Mt 24:13).

Notes

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BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

Interpretive Question

How Does Paul Remain Motivated?

- 14) Paul seems to refer to his motivation in vs. 12. It is a **LOGICAL** motivation. He says “in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.” Paul says:
- a) That I may **REMAIN CONSISTENT** relative to Christ’s purpose for me (Paul’s goal is Christ’s goal for him).
 - b) That the **REASON GOD CHOSE ME WOULD BE REALIZED.**
 - c) That I may **OBTAIN THAT WHICH REPRESENTS THE WHOLE REASON I WAS CHOSEN** in the first place.

Interpretive Question

What Does Paul Imply With His Description Of This Healthy Attitude?

- 15) The implication is clear. Paul, again (see 1:6 and 2:12), is stressing the idea of salvation is a **PROCESS**. Phrases like “**PRESS ON**” (vs. 12), “**REACHING FORWARD**” (vs. 13), “**TOWARD**” (vs. 14) all imply the existence of a **PROCESS**.

Interpretive Question

How Does Paul Apply The Healthy Attitude?

BIBLE STUDY II

- 16) In vs.15a Paul encourages the Philippians to have the **healthy attitude**. He then applies it. Study the following diagram of the application.

Notes —

THE HEALTHY ATTITUDE	THE APPLICATION OF THE HEALTHY ATTITUDE
Not that I have already obtained it (v.12)	If you do not have the attitude in every aspect of your life (v.15b)
But I press on (v.12)	At least (HOWEVER) live according to the attitude in the areas that you have already attained (v. 16). It is also implied that you will move ahead when Paul says GOD WILL REVEAL THAT ALSO TO YOU IN v.15c.

Interpretive Question

What About Those Referred To Earlier As The False Circumcision?
Are They Christians?

- 17) Paul answers this question very directly. In vs. 18 he says that they are “enemies of the cross of Christ.” No, they are not Christians.
- 18) Remember, Paul has just finished writing about **two** different groups of people:
- a) The **TRUE CIRCUMCISION**.
 - b) The **FALSE CIRCUMCISION**.

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

19) Now he distinguishes between them by referring to **TWO** different “**WALKS**”:

- a) The walk according to the example of Paul and the pattern of others (vs. 17).
- b) The walk of those who are enemies of the cross of Christ (vs. 18). Their end is destruction. They walk according to their appetites and earthly things (vs. 19). They have a fleshly or worldly walk.

Interpretive Question

Why Do Christians Need To Avoid This Fleshly Or Worldly Walk?

20) This is the question that Paul begins to answer when he uses the connecting term “**FOR**” in vs. 20.

- a) The answer is because we are citizens of heaven. We are not worldly. We are heavenly. As Paul often says (for example, see Ephesians 5:8) in other Bible passages, he says here again: Walk according to who you are.
- b) Study the diagram to understand the flow of thought. Note how the section is organized as a contrast. For Paul, it is black and white.

WHO THEY ARE	HOW THEY WALK	WHERE THEY ARE FROM
True circumcision	True walk: Paul and others are examples	Heaven
False circumcision	False walk: they are enemies of Chrsit	The world / flesh

BIBLE STUDY II

Interpretive Question

Notes —

How Will This “**HEAVENLINESS**” Finally Be Realized Completely?

- 21) Paul answers this question in vs. 21. Our bodies will be changed from fleshly bodies to spiritual bodies. Our “**HEAVENLINESS**” is not yet complete because we still have fleshly bodies. This often causes problems in our walk (see Mt 26:41; Rom 7:14-20; Gal 5:17). However, someday our bodies will be changed and will be in harmony with the change in our spirits.
- a) This will be done through the sovereignty of God (vs. 20,21).
 - b) God is sovereign in the beginning of the work in us (1:6). He is sovereign during the process (1:6; 2:13). He is also sovereign in the completion of the work in us (1:6; 3:20, 21).

Interpretive Question

What Is The Implication Of This Future Fact?

- 22) Paul introduces the implication when he says “**THEREFORE**” in 4:1.
- a) The implication of what will happen in the future is that the Philippians should “**STAND FIRM IN THE LORD**” now. Endurance comes from hope.
 - b) We might note that “**STAND FIRM**” is a repetition of what Paul already wrote in 1:27.

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

b. Application.

- 1) How valuable is Christ to you? Would you consider everything of worldly value in your past as being garbage relative to gaining Christ? How about your accomplishments? Your money? Your reputation?
- 2) What is your purpose in life? Is it to know God? Or is it to be “successful” according to the world’s definition of success? When you wake up in the morning, what do you consider to be the purpose for being alive that day? Is it to know God? Do you accept that the only way to know God is through the death of Christ? Do you understand that this includes your own “death.” You must die to self in order to know Jesus!
- 3) Is your goal in life Christ’s goal for you? Remember that God’s goal for you is to be transformed into the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). Do you consider this goal in all aspects of your life? Is it a reality to you? Do you realize that you are being changed? Do you want to be changed? Do you judge the success or failure of each day according to that goal? Do you see this as a process? Are you willing to pay the price of time in order to see results?
- 4) What kind of attitude controls your life? Is it a healthy attitude? Can you accept that you make mistakes? Can you learn from those mistakes and press on without being discouraged? Or are you willing to do only the things that you can do “perfectly”? Or do you simply do nothing because you have an attitude of hopelessness that controls your actions?
- 5) What does the picture of your Christian life look like? Are you intense like a runner who is stretching toward the finish line and who has his eyes fixed on it? Or is the picture one of you lounging on a hammock?
- 6) Do you gain practical hope in your life from the future hope of being transformed in your body? Does the hope of the future allow you to stand firm today? Or are you weak today because your focus is on the past or present circumstances?

BIBLE STUDY II

3. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

Notes —

a. Observation and Interpretation.

- 1) In 4:1 Paul is concluding his thoughts on walking the good walk, and at the same time he is preparing to gently encourage unity in a specific case. He does this through the repetition of an earlier exhortation to be in unity (see 1:27).

Interpretive Question

Who Are Those Who Are Involved In The Specific Case?

- 2) Paul says in vs. 2 “**I URGE**” (two times). He says in vs. 3 “**I ASK YOU ALSO.**” Those who are the objects of each of those verbs are the people who are involved.
 - a) Euodia and Syntyche (they need to be in harmony).
 - b) “**TRUE COMRADE**” (he will help bring them together).
 - c) Refer to the word studies corresponding to vs. 2,3 for further commentary concerning who these people were and how Paul counseled them.

b. Application.

- 1) Are you a “Euodia” or a “Syntyche” in your church? Do you allow personality conflicts to be a source of disunity? Are you able to walk and work with others who are different than you?

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

Author's Illustration:

Consider the following poem:

To dwell above with saints we love
O that will sure be glory.
But to dwell below with saints we know
Well, that's another story.

Insert Your Illustration:

- 2) Do you work alone or as part of a team? Do you perceive the church as a team? A body?
4. Observation/Interpretation/Application.
 - a. Observation and Interpretation.
 - 1) After Paul gives specific instructions concerning unity he repeats his general challenge to rejoice: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!"

BIBLE STUDY II

Interpretive Question

Notes —

Why Is It So Important For The Philippians To Rejoice?

- 2) The answer to this question is not clear. It seems to be relevant to evangelism. Paul concludes in vs. 5 by saying “the Lord is near.” This seems to be the reason to “rejoice always” and to have a “forbearing spirit” (see word study).
 - a) This forbearing spirit is to “be known by all men.” It is to be a witness. They are to rejoice always. This includes rejoicing in the midst of persecution (surely Paul is reflecting on the example he left them during his original visit when he and Silas were imprisoned: see Acts 16).
 - b) Their self restraint against hatred and bitterness (forbearing) toward those who persecute them must be seen by all men. This is accomplished by rejoicing in all things.
 - c) The importance of rejoicing is due to the need for urgent evangelism. “The Lord is near.”

Interpretive Question

Is There An Alternative To Rejoicing?

- 3) Yes! Paul says to “rejoice always.” He then says in vs. 6 to “be anxious for nothing.”
 - a) The alternative to rejoicing is worrying.
 - b) Consider the following structure of contrast or alternative.

		ACTION	WHEN		
		Rejoice	Always		
opposites		Be Anxious	Never		opposites

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

Interpretive Question

How Can They Avoid This Anxiety?

- 4) Paul introduces the solution with the word “but” (vs. 6). Anxiety can be avoided through prayer and thanksgiving. If we pray and give thanks then we will not worry. If we worry then we will not pray and give thanks.
 - a) The contrast points to replacement as the solution. The context also indicates that Paul is talking about replacement (in vs. 8 anxious thoughts are to be replaced with good thoughts: also see Col 3:2).
 - b) Worrying about things is replaced by praying about things. The result of this method of replacement is the opposite of anxiety. The result is peace (vs. 7).
- b. Application.
 - 1) Do you realize that your testimony is greatly affected by your disposition? An attitude of rejoicing is important in evangelism. Are you a person of joy? Can you rejoice in the Lord in the worst of times?
 - 2) Do you practice replacement with respect to worry? Do you waste time worrying or do you replace it with time spent in prayer? Do you replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts? Do you know the peace of God? This peace is a result of prayer because prayer releases things to God and rests in His sovereignty. Could you be at peace in the midst of suffering?

BIBLE STUDY II

5. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

a. Observation and Interpretation.

- 1) Paul concludes (“**FINALLY**”: vs. 8) this section of instructive challenges with a series of possible replacements in the thought life.
 - a) The greatest replacement is the one that Paul writes about in Gal 2:20. That is, to replace your life with the life of Christ.
 - b) Paul is an example of one who has done this. So he exhorts the Philippians to imitate his example (which is to imitate Christ: 1 Cor 11:1).

Interpretive Question

What Is The Result Of Following Paul’s Advice?

- 2) The result is that “the God of peace will be with you” (vs. 9).
 - a) The result of replacing anxiety with prayer was that “the peace of God” would be with them.
 - b) The result of replacing your life with the life of Christ is that “the God of” that “peace will be with you.”
 - c) It is one thing to have the peace of God. It is another thing to have the God of that peace. The difference is in putting action behind your prayers. Paul does not stop with the exhortation to pray. He makes that the foundation. But it is a foundation that assumes action (“**PRACTICE**”: vs. 9). Prayer without action is like faith without works. It is dead. It is dead because it is really not possible to have the peace of God with you without having the God of that peace with you!

Notes

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BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

b. Application.

- 1) Do you try to have the peace of God in your life without having the God of that peace in your life?
- 2) Do you put action behind your prayers? Does your faith produce works?

D. An Outline of the Structure of Section #2.

1. Repetition of the general challenge of the letter (3:1).
2. Warning against those who are not of Christ (3:2-21).
 - a. Discourse on the difference between true and false circumcision (vs. 2-10).
 - 1) True circumcision puts no confidence in the flesh (vs. 3-6).
 - a) Description of confidence in the flesh (vs. 4-6).
 - (1) Paul could easily have confidence in the flesh (vs. 4).
 - (2) A list of reasons why (vs. 5, 6).
 - 2) Instead, true circumcision denies the flesh in order to gain Christ (vs. 7-16).
 - a) General statement or introduction (vs. 7).
 - b) It is worth the price to lose everything to know Christ (vs. 8).

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c) Specification: losing self righteousness to gain God's righteousness (vs. 9-16).

Notes —

(1) **PURPOSE:** to know (vs. 10).

(a) "Him" (vs. 10a).

(b) The power of "His" resurrection (vs. 10b).

(c) The fellowship of "His" sufferings (vs. 10c).

(2) **METHOD:** death (vs. 10d).

(3) **RESULT:** resurrection (vs. 11-16).

(a) Clarification of the result (vs. 12).

i. Not completely realized yet (vs. 12a).

ii. But I move towards it (vs. 12b).

(b) Restatement of the clarification (vs. 13, 14).

i. Not realized yet (vs. 13a).

ii. But I look ahead and I do not look behind (vs. 13b).

iii. I press on toward the goal (vs. 14).

(c) Encouragement to have the same attitude (vs. 15,16).

i. Have the attitude in general (vs. 15a).

ii. If you do not understand certain details then God will help you (vs. 15b).

iii. But at least put into practice what you do understand (vs. 16).

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes

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- b. Discourse on the difference between two walks (vs. 17-21).
 - 1) Encouragement to follow the walk of Paul and others (vs. 17).
 - 2) The existence of another walk (vs. 18, 19).
 - a) Description of that walk (vs. 18b,19).
 - 3) Reason to walk the first walk (vs. 20-22).
 - a) Because of our heavenly citizenship (vs. 20a).
 - b) Which will have its climax and its proof in our future transformation (vs. 21a).
 - (1) Which will be a result of His sovereignty (vs. 21b).
 - (2) Implication: encouragement to stand firm (4:1).
- 3. A plea for unity (4:2, 3).
 - a. Harmony between Euodia and Syntyche (vs. 2).
 - b. Assistance from a peacemaker (vs. 3).
- 4. A repeated challenge to rejoice (vs. 4-7).
 - a. Proclamation (vs. 4).
 - b. Because of the need for urgent evangelism (vs. 5).
 - c. Avoid the opposite which is anxiety (vs. 6, 7).
 - 1) Method: prayer and thanksgiving (vs. 6).
 - 2) Result: peace (vs. 7).

BIBLE STUDY II

5. A concluding instruction or challenge (vs. 8, 9).
 - a. What to think about (vs. 8).
 - b. Walk like Paul (vs. 9a).
 - c. Result: the God of peace is with you (vs. 9b).

Notes —

Author's Comment:

Using the outline, challenge the students to identify relationships between parts (introduction, continuity, contrast, explanation, rationalization, specification, purpose, method, result, continuation, balance, application, climax, justification, implication or conclusion, cause and effect, reason, replacement).

E. Conclusion to Section #2.

1. Summary sentence. Paul gives challenging instructions which focus on rejoicing, unity, and warnings against impure influences.
2. Title. Challenging instructions continued.

IV. Section #3 (Phil 4:10-20).

A. Introduction to Section #3.

1. This section, although it appears to be postscript, is a very important part of the contents and purpose of the letter.
- 2) We might divide the section into five parts:
 - a) A general response for the Philippians concern for Paul (vs. 10-13).
 - b) A continuation of his positive response (vs. 14-17).
 - c) A confirmation that he received the gift (vs. 18).

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

d) The result of their giving (vs. 19).

e) Conclusion: glory to God (vs. 20).

B. Word Study of Section #3.

1. Revived (vs. 10) - means to sprout again; to blossom again; to put forth new branches.
2. Were concerned (vs. 10) - the use of the imperfect tense signifies a continual concern.
3. Content (vs. 11) - means to be independent of external circumstances; to be self sufficient; not relying on support from others. Of course, Paul depended on Christ. He did not depend on himself or other people. This was something he had to learn (see vs. 13).
4. Even in Thessalonica (vs. 16) - means that Thessalonica was a much wealthier church than Philippi. Nevertheless, when Paul ministered in Thessalonica, it was the poorer Philippian church that supported him.
5. Profit (vs. 17) - means increase; multiply; interest. The business metaphor that began in vs. 15 describes gaining heavenly dividends for earthly investments.
6. Fragrant aroma (vs. 18) - means acceptable sacrifice. Giving to the work of the gospel is considered a sacrifice to God.
7. Supply (vs. 19) - is the same Greek word as is used in vs. 18 ("I am amply supplied": I am full). God will fill them as they filled Paul (Gal 6:7; Lk 6:38).
8. In glory (vs. 19) - means gloriously; God gives in ways that manifest His glory.

BIBLE STUDY II

C. Study Structure of Section #3.

Notes

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1. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

a. Observation and Interpretation.

- 1) Paul moves slowly in his response to their gift. He wants to be careful to defend himself against accusations that he is personally profiting from the Gospel. And so, he first responds in a general way to their concern for him (vs. 10-13).

Interpretive Question

Why Does Paul Respond?

- 2) First, Paul tells them what the reason is not (“Not that I”: vs. 11).
 - a) Paul does not take time to thank them simply as a way to make them aware of his additional needs. He is not asking them for more help.
 - b) His motive in thanking them is not to show them that he is relying on them. Actually, he says plainly that he does not rely on them.

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —

Interpretive Question

Who Does Paul Rely On?

- 3) In vs. 11, Paul says that he has “learned to be content” (self sufficient). The point here is that Paul does not rely on “missionary support.” He relies on Christ.
 - a) Certainly he relies on Christ to provide for him, but “more directly” he relies on Christ to enable him to live in whatever circumstances that the situation presents to him (vs. 12, 13).
 - b) These circumstances can include hunger (vs. 12; 1 Cor 3:11; 2 Cor 6:3; 11:27).

Discussion Point

Did Paul lack faith?

To say that Christians should **never** be hungry or have a lack of things they need is to have to say that Paul was wrong and lacked faith. What do you think?

- c) To deny hardship is to take away the opportunity of vs. 13. It would take away the opportunity to experience the deeper provision from Christ. It is one thing to receive physical provision from Christ. It is another thing to receive spiritual (character forming) provision from Christ.
- d) Paul’s teaching is not superficial. It conflicts with some of our modern day, superficial teachings. Paul never focused on the superficial things. For Paul, Christ represented much more than physical provision because Christ’s purpose went much deeper than the physical realm.

BIBLE STUDY II

- e) And so Paul does not focus on the healing of Epaphroditus, but on his attitude of giving all for Christ. This is not to minimize healing. Rather, it is to focus on Christ and being transformed into His image. Paul does not focus on material provision. Rather, he focuses on the spiritual provision of Christ's enabling power in him (see 2 Cor 12:9, 10).
- f) This is not to minimize material provisions. It is simply to put them in perspective. They do not matter. What matters is Christ in him. This is the point of vs. 13. (Study Mt 6:25-33).

Interpretive Question

So Was It Wrong To Send Paul The Gift?

- 4) No! Paul states this clearly with the use of the term “**NEVER-THELESS**” (vs. 14). They had “done well” to send it at that time and also in the past (vs. 15, 16).
 - a) But again, Paul's focus is not on the physical gift (introduced in vs. 17 by the repetition of the phrase “not that I”). Paul is focused on the things above (Col 3:2).
 - b) His theology **never** focuses on physical, temporal things. Those things **only** find value in their eternal influence.
- 5) And so finally in vs. 17, we have the answer to our original question. Why does Paul respond? Why is he happy about their gift?
 - a) He is happy because of how it benefits them.
 - b) He is happy because the benefit is eternal.

Notes —

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Notes —

Interpretive Question

Is There Then No Meaning In The Here And Now?

- 6) Yes there is meaning. Paul does not negate the value of material things. He simply does not focus on them as his goals.
 - a) Paul further explains vs. 17 in vs. 19. As is consistent with Lk 6:38, present giving results in present receiving.
 - b) Part of the “**PROFIT**” of vs. 17 is shown in vs. 19 to be a very practical, material, present provision to meet their physical needs (this verse also speaks of spiritual blessings: see Eph 1:18; 3:16-20).
- 7) Four important points can be made here:
 - a) Giving to a missionary (to the work of the expansion of the gospel) is considered a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God (vs. 18). It is specifically within this context of missionary giving that we find the often quoted vs. 19.
 - b) God supplies their needs (vs. 19). This implies that they have needs. Yes, Christians can be needy. Their need gives God the opportunity to supply them.
 - c) When God provides for Christians, He does it in a way that glorifies Himself (vs. 19b).
 - d) Therefore, the conclusion and focus of the provision must be on giving glory to God (vs. 20).
- b. Application.
 - 1) Do you need to revive your giving to missions? Do you need to blossom again in your commitment to a certain missionary?
 - 2) What are your motives when you thank others? Do you sincerely want to thank them or do you have ulterior motives?

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- 3) Who do you trust for provision? Your family? Your salary? Or do you rely on God? Who is your master? Is your reliance focused on your physical situation? Or is it focused on a deeper reliance? Does it depend on what you do and do not have materially? Or does it depend on Christ in you or not in you? Do you consider that the most important provision is the provision of Christ in you which providing the ability to do all things in regardless of your circumstances? Is your provision defined by your stomach? By your physical health? By your material possessions? Or is it defined by Christ in you? Consider Mt 6:33. Do you take away the opportunity of the deeper provision by focusing on and desiring the superficial provision?
- 4) Do you sincerely desire that others give to your ministry so that they will be blessed? Or is your focus on your benefit?
- 5) Do you see and pray for God to be glorified when you ask for provisions?

Notes —

D. An Outline of the Structure of Section #3.

1. A general response to their concern for him (vs. 10-13).
 - a. Introduction (vs. 10).
 - b. Clarification of motive in responding (vs. 11-13).
 - 1) Not to voice his need (vs. 11a).
 - 2) He adjusts to different situations (vs. 11b-12).
 - a) When there is much (vs. 12).
 - b) When there is little (vs. 12).
 - c) Method: through Jesus' strength in him (vs. 13).

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Notes

2. A continuation of his positive response (vs. 14-17).
 - a. Present praise (vs. 14).
 - b. Past praise (vs. 15, 16).
 - c. Clarification of motive in responding (vs. 17).
 - 1) Not seeking the gift (vs. 17a).
 - 2) Seeking their benefit (vs. 17b).
3. A confirmation that he received the gift (vs. 18).
4. The result of their giving (vs. 19).
5. Conclusion: glory to God (vs. 20).

Author's Comment:

Using the outline, challenge the students to identify relationships between parts (specification, continuation, continuity, explanation, rationalization, method, contrast, result, conclusion).

E. Conclusion to Section #3.

1. Summary sentence. Paul thanks the Philippians for their gift without a view towards his own benefit, but with a view towards their benefit and the glory of God.
2. Title. Response to their gift.

BIBLE STUDY II

IV. Section #4 (Phil 4:21-23).

Notes —

A. Introduction to Section #4. Paul ends the letter with typical greetings and a benediction.

B. Word Study of Section #4.

1. Caesar's household (vs. 22) — not blood relatives (family) of Caesar, but employed slaves and freedmen in and around the palace (see 1:13).

C. Study of the Structure of Section #4.

1. Observation/Interpretation/Application.

- a. Observation and Interpretation.

- 1) This is the end of the letter. Yet Paul is giving greetings.

Does Paul Often End With Greetings?

- 2) Yes. See Rom 16:3-23; 1 Cor 16:19, 20; 2 Cor 13:12, 13; Col 4:10-18.

- b. Application.

- 1) Do you remember to show concern and interest for other churches?

- 2) Or are the other churches your enemies?

D. An Outline of the Structure of Section #4.

E. Conclusion of Section #4.

BIBLE STUDY II

Notes —