

# Proclaiming Christ

Phil 1:12-26

SS Lesson for 01/06/2013

**Devotional Scripture:** Ps 119:169-176

## OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW AND APPROACH TO LESSON

*Key Verse: Phil 1:18*

Commentary from Barnes' Notes

*Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson*

LESSON BACKGROUND

*From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*

### MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

SUPPORT THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE GOSPEL (1:12-14)

*Seek to keep daily issues from hindering the advancement of the gospel (12)*

Remove everything that hinders (Heb 12:1-2)

Forget the sinful pass and be committed to the future (Phil 3:13-14)

Endure hardships and serve God (2 Tim 2:3-4)

*Seek the understanding that all things are part of God's purpose (13)*

God's purposes will always prevail (Prov 19:21)

Know that we are called according to God's purposes (Rom 8:28)

We need to be transformed to learn and discern God's purposes (Rom 12:2)

Seek to always make the most of opportunities that are a part of God's purposes (Eph 5:15-17)

*Pray for the bold preaching and teaching of God's Word (14)*

Pray for the discernment and clarity of God's Word (Eph 6:18-20)

Praying as a group or congregation has great power (Acts 4:31)

Pray for open doors for God's Word (Col 4:2-4)

REJOICE THAT CHRIST IS PREACHED (1:15-18)

*Know that some will use God for selfish ambitions (15, 17)*

Some will be greedy for money (1 Peter 5:2)

Some will have their minds on earthly things (Phil 3:18-19)

Some will be teachers of false doctrines as a means for financial gain (1 Tim 6:3-5)

*Know that others follow God out of love (15, 16)*

Love by voluntarily discharging the trust of God (1 Cor 9:16-17)

Love by being faithful (1 Cor 4:1-3)

Love by doing God's work free of charge (2 Cor 11:7)

*Know that all that matters is that Christ is preached (18)*

Christ preached has the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:22-25)

One can only truly preach if he is sent from God (Rom 10:15)

Jesus Christ should be preached both in season and out of season (2 Tim 4:2)

BE COMMITTED TO THE SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT OF BELIEVERS (1:19-26)

*Committed to pray for spiritual advancement (19)*

Pray for advancement through maturity (Heb 6:1)

Pray for advancement through the Church (Eph 4:11-13)

Pray for advancement through the power of the Holy Spirit in the inner being (Eph 3:16-19)

*Committed to bold support for spiritual advancement (20-21)*

Support through giving of oneself (2 Cor 8:1-5)

Support through godly caring for one another (Phil 2:19-21)

Support through financial giving (Phil 4:14-16)

*Committed to the advancement of faith (22-26)*

By contending for the faith (Jude 1:3)  
By the support and intercession of Jesus (Luke 22:32)  
By remaining true to God (Acts 11:23)  
By encouragement to endure (Acts 14:22)  
By use of spiritual gifts (Rom 1:11)

## **CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS**

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE BIBLE EXPOSITOR AND ILLUMINATOR COMMENTARY

PRACTICAL POINTS FROM THE BIBLE EXPOSITOR AND ILLUMINATOR

HEART OF THE LESSON FROM THE BIBLE EXPOSITOR AND ILLUMINATOR

*The right and wrong way of proclaiming Christ (Phil. 1:12-18)*

*The highest goal in proclaiming Christ (Phil. 1:19-21)*

*The need to remain faithful (Phil. 1:22-26)*

# Introduction

## Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson teaches how we should always **Proclaim Christ** in our lives. The **study's aim** is to identify ways to rise above our circumstances in order to rejoice in what God is doing. The **study's application** is to consciously structure our thinking and reactions in such a way as to foster proclaiming Christ in our actions and our lives.

### Key Verse: Phil 1:18

18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

#### *Commentary from Barnes' Notes*

[*In every way*] No matter in what way it is done. We are not to suppose, however, that Paul was indifferent as to the way in which the gospel was preached, or the spirit with which it was done; but the meaning is, that it was a matter of rejoicing that it was done at all, whatever the motives might be.

[*Whether in pretence or in truth*] Whether as a mere pretext to cover up some other design, or from pure motives. Their pretence was that they preached the gospel because they believed it true and loved it; their real object was to build up a party, and to diminish the influence and authority of Paul.

[*Christ is preached*] They made known the name of the Saviour, and announced that the Messiah had come. They could not go forth under any pretence as preachers, without making known some truth about the Redeemer. So now, it is hardly possible that any persons should attempt to preach, without stating some truth that would not otherwise be known. The name of a Saviour will be announced, and that will be something. Some views of his life and work will be presented, which, though they may be far enough from full views, are yet better than none. Though there may be much error in what is said, yet there will be also some truth. It would be better to have preachers that were better instructed, or that were more prudent, or that had purer motives, or that held a more perfect system, yet it is much in our world to have the name of the Redeemer announced in any way, and even to be told, in the most stammering manner, and from whatever motives, that man has a Saviour. The announcement of that fact in any way may save a soul; but ignorance of it could save none.

[*I rejoice*] This is an instance of great magnanimity on the part of Paul, and nothing, perhaps, could better show his supreme love for the Saviour. Paul preached to increase his afflictions, and the tendency of that preaching was, probably, as it was designed to be, to unsettle confidence in him, and to lessen his influence. Yet this did not move him. The more important matter was secured, and Christ was made known; and if this were secured, he was willing that his own name should be cast into the shade. This may furnish valuable lessons to preachers of the gospel now:

(1) When we are laid aside from preaching by sickness, we should rejoice that others are in health, and are able to make the Saviour known, though we are forgotten.

(2) When we are unpopular and unsuccessful, we should rejoice that others are more popular and successful-for Christ is preached.

(3) When we have rivals, who have better plans than we for doing good, and whose labors are crowned with success, we should not be envious or jealous-for Christ is preached.

(4) When ministers of other denominations preach what we regard as error, and their preaching becomes popular, and is attended with success, we can find occasion to rejoice-for they preach Christ.

In the error we should not, we cannot rejoice; but in the fact that the great truth is held up that Christ died for people, we can always find abundant occasion for joy. Mingled as it may be with error, it may be nevertheless the means of saving souls, and though we should rejoice more if the truth were preached without any admixture of error, yet still the very fact that Christ is made known lays the foundation for gratitude and rejoicing. If all Christians and Christian ministers had the feelings which Paul expresses here, there would be much less envy and uncharitableness than there is now in the churches. May we not hope that the time will yet come when all who preach the gospel will have such supreme regard for the

name and work of the Saviour, that they will find sincere joy in the success of a rival denomination, or a rival preacher, or in rival plans for doing good? Then, indeed, contentions would cease, and the hearts of Christians, "like kindred drops," would mingle into one.

### **Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson**

The major outlines were determined by using the question: "What does the Scriptural Text teach us about how to Proclaim Christ in our lives?" Using this question, I found the following lesson points from the Scriptural Text phrases as outlined:

<b>Verse</b>	<b>Phrase</b>	<b>Major Outline</b>
12	That the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel	Support the Advancement of the Gospel
18	Whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice	Rejoice that Christ is Preached
25	I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith	Be Committed to the Spiritual Advancement of Believers

### **Lesson Background**

#### **From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary**

Philippians is one of Paul's four Prison Epistles, the others being Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. They are so called because Paul specifically refers to himself as a prisoner in these letters. These references situate the writing of Philippians late in Paul's career, when he was living in Rome under house arrest while awaiting a hearing before Caesar (see Acts 28:16, 30, 31) in about ad 63. Obviously, Paul was unable to visit the churches during this time, so he communicated with them through letters and a network of messengers. Two such messengers, Timothy and Epaphroditus, are mentioned in Philippians 1:1; 2:19-30. Unlike many of Paul's letters, Philippians is characterized by a consistently warm and positive tone. This suggests that Paul was pleased with the progress that the church at Philippi had made. Paul had established that church on his second missionary journey, in about ad 53 (Acts 16:11-40). Thus the believers there had had about a decade to grow spiritually by the time Paul wrote his letter to them. The letter carries the tone of an extended thank-you note for the Philippians' spiritual and financial support of Paul (Philippians 1:5, 19; 2:25; 4:10-19). While Paul was clearly thankful to and for the Philippians, other aspects of their situation were unsettling. During Paul's absence, itinerant teachers seem to have begun to circulate among the churches without his authorization. Such teachers could have a good message but wrong motives (Philippians 1:15-18, today's text). Others simply could have a bad message (3:2; see Lesson 8). It is against such a backdrop that today's lesson opens.

## Major Theme Analysis

*(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)*

### **Support the Advancement of the Gospel (1:12-14)**

12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.  
13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.  
14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

### **Seek to keep daily issues from hindering the advancement of the gospel (12)**

*Remove everything that hinders (Heb 12:1-2)*

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

*Forget the sinful pass and be committed to the future (Phil 3:13-14)*

13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

*Endure hardships and serve God (2 Tim 2:3-4)*

3 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer.

### **Seek the understanding that all things are part of God's purpose (13)**

*God's purposes will always prevail (Prov 19:21)*

21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.

*Know that we are called according to God's purposes (Rom 8:28)*

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

*We need to be transformed to learn and discern God's purposes (Rom 12:2)*

2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

*Seek to always make the most of opportunities that are a part of God's purposes (Eph 5:15-17)*

15 Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is

## **Pray for the bold preaching and teaching of God's Word (14)**

*Pray for the discernment and clarity of God's Word (Eph 6:18-20)*

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. 19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

*Praying as a group or congregation has great power (Acts 4:31)*

31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

*Pray for open doors for God's Word (Col 4:2-4)*

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

## **Rejoice that Christ is Preached (1:15-18)**

15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill.

16 The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.

17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains.

18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice,

## **Know that some will use God for selfish ambitions (15, 17)**

*Some will be greedy for money (1 Peter 5:2)*

2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve;

*Some will have their minds on earthly things (Phil 3:18-19)*

18 For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things

*Some will be teachers of false doctrines as a means for financial gain (1 Tim 6:3-5)*

3 If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, 4 he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5 and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

## **Know that others follow God out of love (15, 16)**

*Love by voluntarily discharging the trust of God (1 Cor 9:16-17)*

6 Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me.

*Love by being faithful (1 Cor 4:1-3)*

So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. 2 Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

*Love by doing God's work free of charge (2 Cor 11:7)*

7 Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge?

## **Know that all that matters is that Christ is preached (18)**

*Christ preached has the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:22-25)*

Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

*One can only truly preach if he is sent from God (Rom 10:15)*

15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

*Jesus Christ should be preached both in season and out of season (2 Tim 4:2)*

2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction.

## **Be Committed to the Spiritual Advancement of Believers (1:19-26)**

19 for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.

20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know!

23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;

24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith,

26 so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

## **Committed to pray for spiritual advancement (19)**

*Pray for advancement through maturity (Heb 6:1)*

6 Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God,

*Pray for advancement through the Church (Eph 4:11-13)*

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

*Pray for advancement through the power of the Holy Spirit in the inner being (Eph 3:16-19)*

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

## **Committed to bold support for spiritual advancement (20-21)**

*Support through giving of oneself (2 Cor 8:1-5)*

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. 2 Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. 5 And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will

*Support through godly caring for one another (Phil 2:19-21)*

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. 20 I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. 21 For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ

*Support through financial giving (Phil 4:14-16)*

Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. 15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need.

## **Committed to the advancement of faith (22-26)**

*By contending for the faith (Jude 1:3)*

3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.

*By the support and intercession of Jesus (Luke 22:32)*

32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

*By remaining true to God (Acts 11:23)*

23 When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

*By encouragement to endure (Acts 14:22)*

22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

*By use of spiritual gifts (Rom 1:11)*

11 I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—

## **Conclusion and Other Thoughts**

### ***Concluding Thoughts from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary***

Paul knew that others were preaching the gospel. He had concerns that it be done properly, for done selfishly it could confuse believers and have a negative effect on the cause of Christ. He wanted to calm their fears and encourage them in their faith by referring to his own experience. We have somewhat the same situation today in that there are many people in our world preaching the gospel. We might be embarrassed by the excesses and antics of some preachers. We could wonder whether our message is being ridiculed and Christians are becoming discouraged because of the perversion and commercialization of the gospel. Yet we want everyone in the world to hear the gospel, and we are committed to the spiritual growth of believers.

### ***Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator***

1. What is important is the preaching of the gospel, not who preaches it (Phil. 1:12-17)
2. We should rejoice that the Holy Spirit is not limited in the means He uses to convict unbelievers (vs. 18)
3. God in His sovereignty always accomplishes His purposes, despite impossible circumstances (vs. 19)
4. At times a believer's death successfully witnesses to those he could not reach during his life (vs. 20-21)
5. A faithful Christian facing death should be "ready to go but ready to stay" (vs. 22-24)
6. God has so gifted us that each person can serve Him in ways no one else can (vs. 25-26)

### ***Heart of the Lesson from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator***

Everyone is confronted with deadlines. Some have more than others, depending on age and circumstances, but we all have deadlines of one sort or another. There is one appointment we will never be late for. "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9:27). We are often late for appointments we make or agree to. No one, however, will be early or late at that divinely set time when we meet our Maker. Everyone must one day stand before God in judgment. While we are still here on earth, we should buy up every opportunity to proclaim Christ to those who do not know Him. In fact, we should make opportunities to share the gospel. Make friends. When appropriate, ask questions that show your interest in them. Do not be oppressive and make people feel stupid or guilty. In short, build a relationship, and be sensitive to the Lord's leading. Do things with unsaved people and for them. You might think of this type of approach as lifestyle evangelism. Scripture exhorts us to share the good news by our lives and with our lips. This is a big and very important responsibility. Does this assignment mean we all need to be preachers and evangelists? No!

### ***The right and wrong way of proclaiming Christ (Phil. 1:12-18)***

The Apostle Paul's message to the Philippians was written while he was imprisoned for proclaiming Christ. There was a time when he was against Christ and Christians. In fact, he persecuted them terribly before his conversion (Acts. 9:1). He even imagined he was doing God a favor by doing these things. However, all that changed when he responded positively to the message of Christ. News of Paul's

imprisonment for proclaiming Christ spread far and wide. It emboldened some who witnessed, but not always for the right reason or with the proper motive. Love was absent in the case of some. Love for Christ and for His message was absent. It was replaced by an intention to bring distress and hardship to Paul. An "I told you so; I hope you learn your lesson there" mentality seems to have characterized these people. The response Paul gave should be an encouragement for us. We too may be misunderstood at times even though we are not guilty of the charge against us. Like Paul, we should do our best to find some good that comes even from those who have wrong motives. We can learn a needed lesson for ourselves from the apostle's experience and response. It is at the very heart of this lesson.

**The highest goal in proclaiming Christ (Phil. 1:19-21)**

That goal should always be that Christ will be exalted. We must not let criticism and faultfinding keep us from proclaiming Christ. Remember, we do so with both our life and our lips. The important thing for Paul was that Christ was proclaimed. Of course, he was referring to the Christ of Scripture. His example here must not be taken to mean that as long as people talk about Jesus even though they do not believe He is God and have not placed trust in Him, we should all rejoice in it. It was not the message that was wrong here. It was the motive for proclaiming the good news.

**The need to remain faithful (Phil. 1:22-26)**

No matter what the circumstances are, God wants us to be faithful to Him. Of course, we do not need to rejoice because we are facing hard times. What we do need to do is continue to live for God and share the good news of Christ's love and salvation. The heart of this week's lesson is to keep on keeping on!