

## New Morning Magical

### Act like you're saved!

We're in a new epistle today from the Apostle Paul to the Philippians. This is a short letter, but it's packed with great stuff to aid us in our quest to go free. And, just as a quick heads-up, we are nearing the end of our exploration into Paul's writings. We have only one letter to Titus and two to Timothy, the second of which is Paul's final epistle before his death at the hands of the Romans.

So let's begin today in Philippians 1, verse 6:

6 having this same confidence, that He Who undertakes a good work among you, will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ.

The *"He Who undertakes a good work among you"* is of course, the Father. He is not going to leave you alone or entirely on your own until the Lord returns; quite the opposite: The Father will be *"performing"* His *"good work"* in you until *"the day of Jesus Christ."* Never think that the Father would start anything and not finish it; that's never happened and won't ever happen.

9 And this I am praying, that your love may be superabounding still more and more in realization and all sensibility,  
10 for you to be testing what things are of consequence, that you may be sincere and no stumbling block for the day of Christ,  
11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that is through Jesus Christ for the glory and laud of God.

Always be watching for – *"be testing"* – what matters most – *"what things are of consequence"* – according to the spirit's life in you. Don't get caught up in what the rest of the world focuses on, which are things of little consequence, or none at all.

28 and not being startled by those who are opposing in anything, which is to them a proof of destruction, yet of your salvation, and this from God.

This is an interesting phrase, isn't it? Don't be *"startled by those who are opposing in anything."* Paul doesn't stop with that instruction, though; he goes on, rather cryptically, to recommend marveling at your salvation. The destruction that awaits opposers isn't for you, so brush them off like flies on a horse's rear end.

## Chapter 2

5 For let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also,  
6 Who, being inherently in the form of God, deems it not pillaging to be equal with God,  
7 nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity,  
8 and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

You may remember this phrase from our exploration of 1 Corinthians 2:16: *“we have the mind of Christ.”* The phrase in Philippians 2:5, *“let this disposition be in you, which is in Christ Jesus also,”* and the text that follows through verse 8, is like a more complete explanation of what the mind of Christ looks like. The image here is one of the Son of God Who *KNOWINGLY* and *WILLINGLY* gave up His position in the celestials, which He occupied before anything else was created, to become like you and me, entirely human, and to live in obedience to the Father, as an example to all of us, even though He knew it would kill Him.

The question arises, are you and I willing to take on Yeshua’s disposition – His frame of mind – even if it costs us our lives; perhaps not literally, but in ways that go against human customs and values, such as family ties, careers, and social standing?

There is reward for such a disposition:

9 Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name,  
10 that in the name of Jesus every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean,  
11 and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.

Note the *“every’s”* in verses 10-11: *“every knee,”* and *“every tongue.”* The Father leaves no one out of the *“every’s.”* He will win EVERYONE to Himself through Christ, *“celestial and terrestrial and subterranean,”* before the eons are concluded.

12 So that, my beloved, according as you always obey, not as in my presence only, but now much rather in my absence, with fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect,

This last phrase bothered me for a long time: *“be carrying your own salvation into effect.”* I couldn’t wrap my brain around what this meant. I thought Christ had already won salvation for all who believed in Him. How could more be needed? What more could be required? But this isn’t what Paul is suggesting at all: He’s simply saying, in effect, *“Now that you are saved, be living like that! Make what you have won effective today; make it count; make it matter; line up your character with your salvation.”*

The *“fear and trembling”* part simply means, don’t take this for granted, and never think you have it all figured out; that’s called pride, and it won’t work, so stay very humble, entirely unassuming, and never puffed up.

13 for it is God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight.

You don’t have to will or work out of your own resources; your Father is operating in you; He strengthens and guides you, assuming that you’re focused on Him and His leading. Oh yeah, the Father does this out of sheer delight! He literally loves helping you like this. He knows that you can’t walk through this wicked eon by yourself, so He operates in you because it delights Him to do it. Cool, huh?

14 All be doing without murmurings and reasonings,  
15 that you may become blameless and artless, children of God, flawless, in the midst of a generation crooked and perverse among whom you are appearing as luminaries in the world.

*“All be doing without murmurings and reasonings”* simply means knock off any grouching about your lot in life or the path you’re on. Get on with where you are, whom you’re with, and where you live. You want better? First, become content, right where you are, like Paul, which we’ll explore later on. Our experience, Barbara’s and mine, has been that accepting where we are as from the Father and in accord with His purpose, enables us to learn the most from our circumstances and relationships, unless and until He shows differently. It isn’t easy, but resistance only makes things worse, whereas acceptance gives you the opportunity to learn what resistance can never teach you, and gratitude prepares you for His next step, whatever that may be.

19 Now I am expecting, in the Lord Jesus, to send Timothy to you quickly, that I also may be of good cheer when I know of your concerns.

20 For I have no one equally sensitive, who will be so genuinely solicitous of your concerns,  
21 for all are seeking that which is their own, not that which is Christ Jesus'.

Verse 21 is a striking indictment by Paul of the motives he observed in others he may have mentored. Beware, then, that you seek that which is Christ's or is of Christ, rather than seeking your own benefit. You won't lose anything you needed anyway.

### Chapter 3

2 Beware of curs, beware of evil workers. Beware of the maimcision [***people insisting on circumcising Gentiles***]

3 for we are the circumcision who are offering divine service in the spirit of God, and are glorying in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in flesh.

Now Paul puts everyone on notice regarding his own pedigree, in which he ultimately places no importance.

4 And am I having confidence in flesh, also? If any other one is presuming to have confidence in flesh, I rather:

5 in circumcision the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in relation to law, a Pharisee,

6 in relation to zeal, persecuting the ecclesia, in relation to the righteousness which is in law, becoming blameless.

Now listen to him dispense with all of his history and lineage:

7 But things which were gain to me, these I have deemed a forfeit because of Christ.

8 But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I forfeited all, and am deeming it to be refuse, that I should be gaining Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, not having **my** righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith:

10 to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, conforming to His death,

11 if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead.

What does Paul say replaces all that he once was? Verses 10 and 11:

10 to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings,  
conforming to His death,  
11 if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead.

Paul's focus was on the resurrection upon Christ's return, which he hoped to attain as he came to, *"know [Christ], and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, conforming to His death."*

All of us like the first part of verse 10: *"to know Him, and the power of His resurrection,"* but let's be honest: who is in a hurry to sign up for the second part: *"And the fellowship of His sufferings, conforming to His death"?*

Neither Barbara nor I can claim to know what the second part may look like for you. God knows. No matter, isn't it worth any cost – every cost – *"to know Him, and the power of His resurrection"?*

We'll stop here for today and pick up the rest of Paul's letter to the Philippians, so join us again, won't you?

And until then ...

May Yahweh bless you and keep you;  
May Yahweh light up His face toward you  
and be gracious to you;  
May Yahweh lift His face to you  
and appoint peace for you.

AMEN