

November 19 Su Reading 323 — Philippians 4:10-20 — All Things Through Him

¹⁰ *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived thinking about me; indeed, you were thinking about me [before], but you lacked opportunity.* ¹¹ *Not that I speak ^[fn]from want, for I learned to be ^[fn]content in whatever circumstances I am.* ¹² *I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in abundance; in any and all things I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.* ¹³ *I can do all things ^[fn]through Him who strengthens me.* ¹⁴ *Nevertheless, you have done well to fellowship [with me] in my affliction.*

¹⁵ *And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the ^[fn]first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church fellowshipped with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone.* ¹⁶ *For even in Thessalonica you sent [a gift] more than once for my needs.* ¹⁷ *Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek the fruit which increases to your account.* ¹⁸ *But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I have been filled, having received from Epaphroditus ^[fn]what you have sent, ^[fn]a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.* ¹⁹ *And my God will fulfill ^[fn]all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.* ²⁰ *Now to our God and Father [be] the glory ^[fn]forever and ever. Amen.*

LSB Footnotes

- (4:11) Lit *according to*
- (4:11) Or *self-sufficient*
- (4:13) Lit *in*
- (4:15) Lit *beginning of*
- (4:18) Lit *the things from you*
- (4:18) Lit *an odor of fragrance*
- (4:19) Or *every need of yours*
- (4:20) Lit *to the ages of the ages*

He Strengthens and Supplies — Twice in this passage, Paul mentions ways in which Jesus provides for us. First, He strengthens us. The familiar, general statement that “*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me*” (v. 13), is made in the context of being content in opposite financial circumstances, “*humble means*” and “*abundance*” (v. 12). We don’t get our strength from financial wealth; we get it from Christ. We can be just as “strong” in material poverty as we can in material luxury. Jesus can give you strength to be poor! The second thing Paul mentions that Jesus does for us is to supply our needs (v. 19). Our “needs” come somewhere between poverty and luxury. Most of us don’t need nearly as much as we think we do. Twice in today’s reading, Paul wrote that he had learned something important. He had learned to be content (v. 11) and to know “*the secret of being filled and going hungry*” (v. 12). We need to learn the secret of contentment. If you have not learned to be content with what you have, you will not be content with what you want.

Instead of a song for today, I encourage you to watch this excellent short video, summarizing the message of Paul’s letter to the Philippians, including the passage that concludes our reading for today.

[Dwell on These Things](#)

¹² *I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He regarded me faithful, putting me into service,* ¹³ *even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;* ¹⁴ *and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which [are] in Christ Jesus.* ¹⁵ *It is a trustworthy saying and deserving full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost.* ¹⁶ *Yet for this reason I was shown mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Christ Jesus might demonstrate all His patience as an example for those ^[fn]who are going to believe upon Him for eternal life.* ¹⁷ *Now to the King of the ^[fn]ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, [be] honor and glory ^[fn]forever and ever. Amen.*

LSB Footnotes

(1:16) Or *destined to*

(1:17) Or *eternal*

(1:17) Lit *to the ages of the ages*

Merciful Savior — Twice in this paragraph, Paul said that Jesus showed him mercy (vv. 13, 16), and this mercy was related to grace (v. 14). Mercy is not getting the bad we deserve, and grace is being given the good we don't deserve. After meeting Jesus on the Damascus Road, Paul came to know that he was a dreadful sinner. He thought he was only persecuting Christians, but he was attacking the Son of God. He didn't deserve mercy, and neither did we. Jesus is merciful, and that is why He came to earth: "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*" (v. 15). He is a merciful Savior. When Christ saved Saul, it was to "*demonstrate all His patience as an example*" to future believers (v. 16). His conversion was a dramatic example of the grace and mercy of God. It is the same for us. Unbelieving friends around us see the difference in our lives. They see us react in silence rather than profanity, in forgiveness rather than retaliation, and in love instead of resentment. We are examples of the grace and mercy of Jesus.

[My Savior's Love - YouTube](#)

I stand amazed in the presence
of Jesus, the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
a sinner, condemned, unclean.

How marvelous, how wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous, how wonderful
Is my Savior's love for me!

— Charles H. Gabriel (1905)

¹ *First of all, then, I exhort that petitions [and] prayers, requests [and] thanksgivings, be made for all men,* ² *for kings and all who are in ^[fn]authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and ^[fn]dignity.* ³ *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,* ⁴ *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the ^[fn]full knowledge of the truth.* ⁵ *For there is one God, [and] one mediator also between God and men, [the] man Christ Jesus,* ⁶ *who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the witness for ^[fn]this proper time.* ⁷ *For this I was appointed a ^[fn]preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.*

LSB Footnotes

(2:2) Or *a high position*

(2:2) Or *seriousness*

(2:4) Or *recognition*

(2:6) Lit *its own times*

(2:7) Or *herald*

Salvation's Plan — There are three primary parts of God's plan for salvation presented in this paragraph. The first is God's desire: He wants salvation for everyone. He "*desires all men to be saved*" (v. 4). Scripture makes it clear that not all will be saved, but their salvation is God's desire. The second step for salvation was to provide a Mediator, "*the man Christ Jesus*" (v. 5). Jesus is the only link between mankind and the Father, not saints or priests. He offered that connection through His voluntary death, which provided payment as "*a ransom for all*" (v. 6). Although both the Father's desire for man's salvation and Jesus' ransom was intended "*for all*," neither was fully realized because of the freedom given to mankind to choose whether to accept the offer or not. The third part of God's plan for salvation involves Christians like us. Paul concluded that it was, "*For this I was appointed a preacher ... an apostle ... [and] a teacher*" (v. 7). God's plan of salvation is offered through a message that must be spread to others so that they also might "*come to the full knowledge of the truth*" (v. 4).

[Arise, My Soul, Arise - YouTube](#)

He ever lives above,
for me to intercede;
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood to plead,
His blood atoned for every race,
His blood atoned for every race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

— Charles Wesley (1742)

November 22 W Reading 326 — 1 Timothy 3:14-16 — Mystery of Godliness

¹⁴ *I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you soon,* ¹⁵ *but* ^[fn] *in case I am delayed, [I write] so that you will know how* ^[fn] *one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.* ¹⁶ *And by common confession, great is the mystery of godliness:*

*He who was manifested in the flesh,
Was* ^[fn] *vindicated* ^[fn] *in the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Proclaimed among the nations,
Believed on in the world,
Taken up in glory.*

LSB Footnotes

(3:15) Lit *if I delay*

(3:15) Or *you ought to conduct yourself*

(3:16) Or *justified*

(3:16) Or *by*

Gospel Hymn — The last verse in this section seems to be a hymn, and it summarizes the gospel. It is called "*the mystery of godliness*" here, but Paul used similar expressions earlier, like "*the mystery*

of the faith" (v. 9) and "the mystery of the gospel" (Eph. 6:19). Just as John 3:16 is a summary of the Good News, so is 1 Timothy 3:16. Six features of the gospel are presented here. 1) That He was "manifested in the flesh," which refers to His incarnation, His time on earth that included the crucifixion; God became man. 2) His vindication (or justification) in the Spirit seems to depict His resurrection. 3) Being "seen by angels" probably pictures His return to heaven. 4) "Proclaimed among the nations" is the later spread of the message of salvation to the Gentiles, and 5) "Believed on in the world" shows its global acceptance by many. 6) Although out of order, the last one, being "taken up in glory," refers to His ascension into heaven. That is the gospel, and we should proclaim it.

We Have a Gospel to Proclaim - YouTube

We have a gospel to proclaim,
Good news for men in all the earth.
The gospel of a Savior's name,
We sing His glory, tell His worth.
— Edward J. Burns (1968)

November 23 Th Reading 327 — 1 Timothy 6:11-16 — Waiting for His Appearing

¹¹ But you, O man of God, flee from these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, ^[fn]perseverance, gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I charge you in the presence of God, who ^[fn]gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which He will ^[fn]bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of ^[fn]kings and Lord of ^[fn]lords, ¹⁶ who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him [be] honor and eternal might! Amen.

LSB Footnotes

(6:11) Or *steadfastness*

(6:13) Or *preserves alive*

(6:15) Lit show

(6:15) Lit *those who reign as kings*

(6:15) Lit *those who rule as lords*

An Accountable Witness — In our study last year, we considered the many things at the end of this passage that speak about the Father, but there are also two important actions of Jesus mentioned here. The first was something He did in the past, i.e., He "testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate" (v. 13). With His life on the line, He declared the truth, that He was a heavenly king, saying, "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice" (John 18:37). His purpose for coming to earth was to proclaim the truth. That is also a purpose for our existence as Christians. We must share our "good confession" of the truth that we have come to know. Jesus was a witness and so are we. The second action of Jesus in our passage for today is something He will do in the future, "the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 6:15), His Second Coming. Paul mentioned this in the context of accountability, charging Timothy to "keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 14). We are to be faithful in our witness and in our obedience so that when Jesus returns, we will hear from our Savior this greeting: "Well done!".

Well Done - YouTube

Well done, well done
My good and faithful one,
Welcome to the place where you belong.
Well done, well done
My beloved child,
You have run the race and now you're home.
Welcome to the place where you belong.
— Jason Ingram, et al. (2018)

November 24 F Reading 328 — Titus 2:11-14 — The Blessed Hope

¹¹ *For the grace of God has appeared, ^[fn]bringing salvation to all men, ¹² ^[fn]instructing us that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of ^[fn]our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good works.*

LSB Footnotes

(2:11) Or *to all men, bringing*

(2:12) Or *disciplining*

(2:13) Or *the great God and our Savior*

Grace and Glory — There are two divine appearances mentioned in today's reading. The first was the appearance of *grace*: "...*the grace of God has appeared*" (v. 11). This refers to the incarnation of Christ when He came to earth in human form. His coming had two purposes mentioned here: to bring us salvation (v. 11) and to instruct us in godliness (v. 12); the former, erasing our past sins, and the latter, protecting us against present temptations by "*instructing us*" to deny ungodliness. Grace is not deserved, so He graciously came that sinners might be saved. The second divine appearance is that of *glory*: "...*the blessed hope and appearing of the glory*" of Christ (v. 13). That is Jesus' Second Coming, when He will come in great glory that will be obvious to all. People who are living ungodly lives should dread such an accountable judgment, but believers are "*looking for*," or looking forward to, that expected appearance (v. 13). At that time, we will share in His glory because "*God ... called you to His eternal glory in Christ*" (1 Pet. 5:10).

O That Will Be Glory - YouTube

When all my labors and trials are o'er,
And I am safe on that beautiful shore,
Just to be near the dear Lord I adore
Will through the ages be glory for me.

O that will be glory for me,
Glory for me, glory for me;
When by His grace I shall look on His face,
That will be glory, be glory for me.
— Charles H. Gabriel (1900)

Meditation: There is a very interesting and important phrase about Jesus in verse 13, where He is called, "*our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ*." It magnifies His deity by calling Him God. This is

only one of seven times in the New Testament that the Greek word for God (*theos*) is used in direct connection with Jesus (cf. John 1:1, 18; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:1). It is like calling Jesus “Yahweh,” the name of God. The Father is Yahweh, but so is the Son and the Holy Spirit.

November 25 Sa Reading 329 — Titus 3:1-8 — Christ Our Savior

¹ *Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,*
² *to slander no one, to be peaceable, considerate, demonstrating all gentleness to all men.* ³ *For we ourselves also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, despicable, hating one another.* ⁴ *But when the kindness and affection of God our Savior appeared,* ⁵ *He saved us, not by works which we did in righteousness, but according to His mercy, through the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,* ⁶ *whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,* ⁷ *so that having been justified by His grace, we would become heirs* ^[fn] *according to [the] hope of eternal life.* ⁸ *This is a trustworthy saying. And concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be intent to lead in good works. These things are good and profitable for men.*

LSB Footnote

(3:7) Or of eternal life according to hope

Justified by Jesus — In yesterday’s reading, we noticed that Jesus was called “*our great God and Savior*” (2:13). In today’s passage, we see the expressions, “*God our Savior*” (v. 4) and “*Christ our Savior*” (v. 6). The overall purpose of Jesus’ coming to earth was to provide salvation for mankind. It was directed by God the Father, who “*saved us ... according to His mercy*” (v. 5). It was a mercy-driven mission, saving people from His future wrath. The Holy Spirit’s part of this mission was one of cleansing through “*washing of regeneration and renewing*” (v. 6). This is the new birth, being born again, or being regenerated. The Son, as a member of the Trinity, performed His mission of grace so that we are “*justified by His grace*” (v. 7). We are given something good that we didn’t deserve. What was that gift? It was justification — being made right (“just as if I’d never sinned”). He did that by giving us His righteousness. Although this passage emphasizes our responsibility as believers to “*be ready for every good work*” (v. 1) and to “*lead in good works*” (v. 8), we are not saved by good works. We are saved by being given Christ’s righteousness when we surrender our hearts and lives to Him, “*Jesus Christ our Savior.*”

I could not find a suitable video for this hymn (“Vain Are the Hopes”), but the words of these two verses are very appropriate for today’s reading:

No hope can on the law be built
Of justifying grace;
The law, that shows the sinner's guilt,
Condemns him to his face.

Jesus! How glorious is Thy grace!
When in Thy name we trust,
Our faith receives a righteousness
That makes the sinner just.

— Isaac Watts (b. 1674)