

The Prison Epistles 04 Main Themes of Phil.

by David Clifford

The sermon highlights the main themes of Philippians, including Paul's love for the Philippians, the warning against Judaizers and false perfectionism, and the plea for unity, all of which are rooted in the sufficiency of God's grace.

Duration: 47:34

Topics: "Rejoicing In Christ", "Liberty In Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experience of setting examinations for his students at Moreland. He explains the rules and time limits for the exams. The speaker then transitions to discussing the theme of rejoicing in the Lord, as mentioned in the book of Philippians. He outlines his understanding of the first chapter, which revolves around the love between Paul and the Philippian Christians, with Christ being at the center of their hearts. The speaker also emphasizes the importance of understanding the concept of liberty in Christ and the need to submit to His will and love one another.

Transcript

You must be one of the old timers, if you can remember that. And one preacher said to one old lady, aged 92, very rich old dear, said, why do you think God has permitted you to reach the age of 92? No hesitation, she said. To test the patience of my relatives.

A lot of truth in that. Well, I'm beginning to think I'm getting old. I thought when I first came to Park of the Palms I was going to feel very, very young and go in swimming every day and play every game that was playable, you know.

But I haven't got that far yet. But you never know, we might get round to something like that before we go. Delighted to be with you.

And we trust and pray that God will bless his word to our hearts this morning. And we'll read the first few verses of Philippians. Philippians chapter one.

And then tonight we'll read Philippians chapter two. Half of it. Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine, for you all, making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, as the margin says you have me in your heart, inasmuch as both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the compassions of Jesus Christ.

This I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that you may approve things that are excellent, you may sense them, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God. But I would you should understand, brethren, things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the fervorance of the gospel. And you will recall that that is where we started on Sunday evening, this series on the main themes of the prison epistles.

The things that have happened unto me have turned out rather for the fervorance of the gospel. And by this time when the Apostle Paul was writing to the Philippians, he had really come to see that God was overruling in everything with his providential care and planning everything to bring blessing not only to himself but to others of Caesar's guards and courtiers. And he was doing a great work for God in many ways in prison and not least in those ways was in writing letters to the Christians he knew and others that he was hearing about from time to time as he was chained there to a Roman soldier in his own higher room in prison in Rome.

Now there were many reasons for the Apostle writing this letter to the Philippians and it will be interesting for us to see some of those reasons before we proceed further. First of all this was a love letter. He loved the Philippian Christians dearly and they loved him just as much.

As a matter of fact my crude outline for the first chapter is as follows and I think you'll find that these three headings sum up the whole chapter. I admit they're pretty crude. The first is this you have me in your heart secondly I have you in my heart and thirdly Christ is in both our hearts or to put it this way Paul in the heart of the Philippians the Philippians in the heart of Paul and Christ in the hearts of both.

That sums up the whole chapter I think you will find. Now he loved them dearly because he led quite a number of them to Christ. They were his sons and daughters in the Lord.

He went to Philippi He'd been there three occasions but he went to Philippi first of all in answer to the Macedonian call.

You remember the Apostle Paul in Acts 16 it is recorded was travelling with his team through Asia Minor through Turkey as it is now and they said to go into Bithynia another area and the Holy Spirit said no not Bithynia so they didn't go there and then somebody suggested they should go further into the centre or the northern parts of Asia Minor and the Holy Spirit said no not there either so they didn't go there and they didn't go anywhere they waited to know where they should go and if you're quite sure that God is telling you not to do this and not to do that or not to go here or not to go there the only thing to do is to do nothing and go nowhere until he makes it plain which shows to God that you are willing to do his will as it is revealed to you and that's very scriptural because it

says he that willeth to do his will shall know and of course the first the first essential for guidance from God is a surrendered will God will never waste his time if I can say that reverently in telling people where to go or what to do if he knows and of course he always does know because of his omniscience that they will do something else so the rule is he that willeth to do his will shall know well now then these people were apparently willing to do God's will and that night they did know because a man from Macedonia in a vision stood over Paul by night and said come over into Macedonia and help us so in the morning he got the boys together in the team and said come on gentlemen I think we'll go into Asia after all or perhaps to Bithynia did he? not on your life he was always obedient

to the heavenly vision not only to the first one but to all the heavenly visions he said I will speak of the abundance of visions and revelations of the Lord why did he get so many? why was he guided so directly? because he was always obedient to the heavenly vision he that willeth to do his will shall know of the doctrine and so it was they journeyed the very next morning by a straight course they didn't go all round the reek into Wellington as we say in England by a straight course they came to the port the first port in Europe in Macedonia in Europe and then they went from there to the first city which wasn't far away only a few miles and that was Philippi now I'm very very pleased as a European that the Apostle Paul obeyed implicitly the call of God the Macedonian call to go to

Macedonia and to the first city in Europe Philippi thank God the gospel had now come to Europe for the first time because Paul obeyed the call you remember he met Libya and some women there there was a Jewish colony there in Philippi but there was no synagogue and some of the women went down to the riverside to have a meeting together from time to time and Paul found them there in a meeting and he joined them and he expounded to them the scriptures preached unto them Jesus and Libya opened her heart to the Lord and so I had presumed in some of the others and before long there was a girl in the city with a spirit of divination an evil spirit and she was eventually converted then they were put in jail you remember and the Philippian jailer and his wife and family were converted and baptized

and this was the beginning of the church at Philippi and these are the Christians to whom he is writing from Rome in prison at this time the epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians now he loved the Philippians dearly they had been constantly in touch with him more about that in a moment or two not only was it a love letter he expresses his love for them and his desire to see them in so many ways but it is a letter of warning warning about Judaizers and false perfectionism as well and the third chapter is mostly taken up with a series of warnings there were some people who had come out of Judaism and accepted Christ and then gone back into Judaism and they tried to make the Christians do the same they wanted to enslave them with the bondage of the law and the Apostle Paul explained

that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth not that the believer is lawless now indeed the believer is under the law to Christ but we are no longer under the Mosaic law and some of these Judaizers wanted to bring the Christians back to perform many of the deeds of the law and bring them into bondage and in another epistle which is all about this Galatians the Apostle says stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free it is the glorious thing to be at liberty in Christ as long as you don't turn that liberty into license as we read of some that did in Matthew 21 in the parable of the householder with his vineyard you remember he did everything he could to get a good crop about five or six things he did I'm not going into it now to

get a good crop and then he gave to his servants liberty and he went into a far country but he wanted fruit and he wanted wine to gladden his heart and he didn't get either because they turned the liberty he had

given to them into license you remember and they stoned and slew the servants and the son of the householder it's a dreadful thing and always brings judgment as it did in the parable when we turn liberty into license but liberty in Christ from the bondage of the law is a blessed thing we are not under law under that law but we are under grace but being under grace means that we are under law to Christ to submit ourselves to do his will to believe in him and to love one another with a pure heart fervently in a very practical and down to earth way and when I say that I'm thinking of

John's first epistle and chapter three his commandments are one that we believe on Christ that is in a continuous sense trusting Jesus not once for all but day by day to meet our every spiritual need and then love our brethren to show that we love Jesus love our brethren in a very practical down to earth way not only were there warnings about Judaizers in chapter three but about false perfectionism you know there's a lot of false perfectionism abroad in the country in the world today there are a lot of holiness movements which are unscriptural you know and I would think extreme in my view and we have seen some tragic and known some tragic cases of believers who have felt that they've had an experience of the Holy Spirit and have been delivered from the old nature and that their old nature

has been crucified and finished with forever inexperience and then after some time after some time they have sinned and had to confess that they had sinned and then they conclude that they've never been saved at all and some of them have had to go to institutions because of mental disorders simply because of extreme holiness teaching but because some people take this to extreme we must remember that the scriptures are full of exhortations to believers to be perfect in the sense of spiritually mature not absolute perfectionism not the eradication of the old nature but to grow in Christ to spiritual maturity and that's the meaning of the word perfect generally of course there are seven meanings in the Greek the Greek word that is used and translated perfect and free in particular but the

most important one which gives us the real sense of the word is spiritual maturity so he warns here in chapter three against those who would seek for perfectionism in the things of God and then of course he makes a plea for unity in this letter there was not much seriously wrong as there perhaps was in the church at Canossi to whom he wrote we'll probably look at them tomorrow but there was a little bit of disorder in that there was slight disunity and he uses the word all and together quite a lot in this letter because he is making a plea for unity and at the end of chapter one and the first part of chapter two he shows the way to unity and this is what we should be discussing tomorrow in particular there were two or tonight I mean in particular there were two ladies in the meeting at

Philippi Euodia and Sintica you read of them in chapter four and verse three two and three who were not getting on too well together they were having a little argument about something or other there was a bit of disunity there and he exhorts them to be of the same mind in the Lord very gracious exhortation mind you it must have been a terrible shock for them when one of the elder brethren stood up on one Lord's day first day of the week and said brethren and sisters we have today got some very very good news for you we're going to read out a letter a wonderful letter and do you know who it's from? it's from the great apostle our dear beloved brother Paul he's in prison at Rome he's dictated a letter for us he's chained to a soldier he's not able to meet us again we all love him dearly now

we're going to read out a letter from Paul and everybody was rejoicing you know as they heard about this letter and how he was praying for them and thanking God for them and sent his love to them and all this you know and it do them such a lot of good and there was Euodia and Sintica sitting on the halfway down somewhere listening to it, enjoying it you know and then the brother reads out and he says and I beseech

you oh dear Sintica that they be of the same mind in the Lord my word what a shock what a shock very very humiliating but I suppose they deserved it in a way because there's no doubt at all about it the grace of Christ is sufficient for us to mend any little any disagreement we have between ourselves and to overcome that sort of thing if the grace of Christ doesn't work in a

Christian organization and church well where does it work anyway the Lord Jesus said to the Apostle Paul my grace is sufficient for you sufficient to overcome this trouble in your body and the grace of Christ is sufficient to overcome any trouble in our soul it's the almighty grace the all sufficient grace of the almighty Son of God I was in Wisconsin in Milwaukee a few months ago in the meeting there and I was thinking of the time when Moody was in Milwaukee his meetings were a bit bigger than mine and somebody said to him at the end of one of his meetings Mr.

Moody have you got the grace to die at the stake and he said to she he said to her he said no ma'am he said I haven't got the grace to die at the stake so she said well Mr.

Moody don't you wish you had the grace to die at the stake and he said no ma'am I don't wish for it all I want is grace to live in Milwaukee and conduct a mission and that's what he was doing at the time so when the need arises when there's a little bit of something between us a little misunderstanding maybe a little trial overcomes us a little personal disaster a little domestic problem then I'm quite sure taking these things to the Lord we shall prove that the grace of the Lord is sufficient for us James says he giveth more grace so the grace is there to have and John by the same spirit says in Christ is grace upon grace grace for all our need but Paul by the same spirit says in Romans chapter 5 and verse 17 those Christians who receive abundance of grace who receive it in its abundance

shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ they will overcome and reign and be victorious if they receive the grace of Christ that there is there to have grace upon grace grace following grace grace for all our need in Christ I have in the past 22 years been setting examinations for my students at Moreland and at the end of every half year and the end of every year we bring them into the lecture room and examination room and we set them down there and we just announce the few rules no talking and you cannot finish until you've been writing for two hours and then you have another half an hour after that if you want it two and a half hours examination and you have to answer six out of the nine questions on the sheet and so we go on and I say now I'm going to bring you three or four sheets of

paper each and the sheet with the examination questions on now I said I'm going to leave the paper here on the front and I'm not going to sit here invigilating all the time I should come in from time to time but I'm going to trust you though of course there never will be in a Bible college any cheating any looking over or anything like that but you'll find there's plenty of paper here there's paper upon paper paper upon paper paper after paper paper for all you need and that's exactly what it means in John 1 in him is grace there's grace upon grace loads of grace bags of grace grace upon grace and grace for all our needs so the apostle makes a plea for unity here all the way through the letter it is underlying the exhortations and especially when he comes to the two ladies Herodias and

Syntyche the apostle also fourthly gives news of his own circumstances there in prison and how he's getting on and he's telling them that he is sending Timothy to them and you know Timothy I think we shall probably find this evening Timothy was a great young fellow and had grown to spiritual maturity had become an elder in the church he had a burden for the blessing of others he had the mind of Christ and he tells them he's sending Timothy and also he was sending Epaphroditus back to them he'd been ill taken ill

on the way as we shall see tonight again I trust and he was sending Epaphroditus back again to them after he had recovered from his illness and sixthly and this is one of our important points this morning he was acknowledging their fellowship with him in the gospel through the

months and years and especially acknowledging this last gift that had come to him from the church at Philippi through this noble young man Epaphroditus who was chosen by the church for this special service for the Lord and in chapter 4 and verse 10 he says I rejoice greatly that now at the last your care of me has flourished again wherein ye were also careful but you didn't have the opportunity but now Epaphroditus was willing to make a long journey hundreds of miles by foot you sent the gift through him and in verse 14 he says you've done well that you did communicate with my affliction when he says affliction I think he means the fact that he was in prison and in need at this time and those few verses there have the same, it is in verse 17 not that I desire a gift I desire fruit that

may abound to your account because it is a good thing for you to be good stewards of the manifold grace of God and for you to give to the Lord's servants not only me, to any of the Lord's servants in that way especially when they are in special need he says I have all and abound because he said I am now full having received of Epaphroditus the things that were sent from you an odor of a sweet smell a sacrifice acceptable while pleasing to God so he said what you gave to me was really a gift to God it was a sacrifice to God it was acceptable to God now no Christian makes any sacrifice to God to atone for his sins because of the once for all sacrifice of Christ this is emphasized in the first half of Hebrews chapter 10 his sacrifice was sufficient never to be remembered once and for all but

Christians are called upon to make present day sacrifices to God not to atone for their sins but because their sins are atoned for out of love and gratitude what about that one in Hebrews 12 I beseech you brethren by the mercy of God present your body a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service the sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not despise I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord and then Hebrews 13 with such sacrifices God is well pleased do good and communicate that doesn't mean writing letters although it might include that but it really means communicating what you have to others of the Lord's people who are in need do good to all men especially to those who are of the

household of faith and so you see there are many present day sacrifices and a good steward of God is very acceptable not only to the people that he helps in the Lord's work but also acceptable to God for with this God is well pleased so the apostle Paul is here acknowledging this gift you will notice in this connection that one of the key words of this epistle is the word fellowship it is and fellowship in the gospel the gospel is used seven times and fellowship is used several times too the idea of fellowship is underlying it too for instance you get fellowship in the gospel in chapter 1 and verse 5 and you get the fervorance of the gospel in chapter 1 and verse 12 and you get the defense of the gospel in chapter 1 and verse 17 and you got the faith of the gospel in chapter 1 and verse

27 and so you could go on there are other instances of that when he talks about the fellowship of the gospel in chapter 1 and verse 5 you will notice he said from the first day until now well we all know what their fellowship in the gospel was now that was their gift to the apostle Paul in prison but what was their fellowship in the gospel with him the first day do you know what that was now of course if I was in the lecture room I'd wait for you to answer that and I'd let you have your guesses but as we're in the service we can't do that thing we must be terribly formal you know how formal and correct I am especially when I have to sing a duet with a dear brother it becomes very informal then but what was their fellowship with

him in the gospel the first day it was hospitality because

you see Lydia not only opened her heart to the Lord but she opened her home to the Lord's servant now of course that's one reason why we like coming to Park of the Palms the hospitality the Christian hospitality is very good here and wherever I shall go throughout the United States and in Britain and other parts I should tell them about your your glowing hospitality and it's a great blessing to God's people this hospitality I know you have a lot of fellowship with one another and this thing is of God keep it up it'll be a blessing to you and a blessing to others through you he never forgot hospitality did the apostle Paul this is what she said to him Lydia to Paul if you have judged me faithful Paul you come with your team into my home and accept my Christian hospitality and he did and he

never forgot it and he put it in this letter and it's been here recorded for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years and God never forgets it when we have fellowship in the gospel in hospitality so remember your home is the Lord's home for the Lord's servant don't dream or think that I'm begging for any more hospitality we have an abundance here at Park of the Palm and you're certainly feeding us too well and I was convicted about it yesterday and I've got to slim much more but what I'm trying to say is make sure like Lydia that not only your heart is open to the Lord but your home is open to the Lord's servant give your home to God go in today together with your wife or your husband kneel on the carpet if you've never done it before say oh God we give this

carpet and this sideboard and this dining suite and the whole lot of home to you to use for your holy service use it as you will the door is open for you to come in and be the head of this house and for your servants to come in as well when the good man of the house in Luke 22 opened the door of his home for the master to come in and occupy that big upper room do you know who came in with him all those who were with the Lord as he opened the door to the Lord he opened the door incidentally and purposefully to those who were the Lord's as well so that was the fellowship in the gospel on the first day hospitality and you know it has a very important place to play in the service of Christ indeed an elder as well as a deacon in the local church should be given to hospitality one of the

conditions you see how important this is to the Lord of course you could go on and extend the idea your car of course is the Lord's car it isn't yours is it you don't keep it for yourself do you you've given it to God haven't you you use it for his service don't you well that's the idea every Christian should be like this your telephone you don't just use your telephone for yourself do you you've given it to the Lord to use in his service and every power and gift that you possess inwardly as well as outwardly you give it to the Lord because you are the Lord he bought you and he bought all that you've got with you and you're all his altogether and therefore I beseech you brethren and sisters by the mercy of God present your bodies a living sacrifice holy, acceptable unto God which is your

spiritual mode of worship and it is your reasonable service but I think the first translation I gave is perhaps the more correct one well now the actual theme in this letter is seen in the key verse in chapter 1 and verse 21 for to me to live is Christ he was talking about the possibility of him dying and of course eventually you know he did die in prison and he lost his life as a martyr and of course he went into the presence of the Lord he wasn't afraid of anything like that but of course it was on his mind from time to time as if had I been spared from this prison he says I'm coming to you Philippians again I want to be a blessing to you but he says if I die well it's alright with me that's gain for me absent from the body present with the Lord never be afraid of going to glory beloved

heaven's a wonderful place get taken up with the Saviour and with glory and you'll never be afraid of passing out to the great beyond as we call it because it's the presence the immediate presence of the Saviour absent from the body present with the Lord so in this respect the apostle says for to me to live is Christ notice he did not say to me to live is to do the service of Christ something better than that he didn't say to me to live is to have the help of Christ something better than that he didn't say to me to live is to know the power of Christ something better than that he didn't say to me to live is to have the victory of Christ something better than that he says to me to live is Christ and that's what I was saying last night

or trying to say in my faltering way last night that the Christian life is Christ not to have the help of Christ not particularly to know the guidance of Christ but Christ himself living his own life through me says the apostle to the praise and glory of his own holy name to me to live is Christ and to die is death so the theme is Christ is all whether by life or by death but of course we mustn't finish this morning without mentioning that one of the most prominent themes in this epistle is the theme of joy the word joy and rejoicing is mentioned many times I used to know how many I think I've forgotten but by this time this is written twelve months after the letter to the Ephesians you know and by this time he was really not languishing in prison but rejoicing in the will of the Lord and

even if he had to face death he was still rejoicing not in his circumstances as I've seen the other day but rejoicing in the Lord and it's a great thing to joy in the Lord he gives an exhortation about joy he gives his experience about joy and he gives his expectation of it as well in Isaiah 61 the prophet says that he gives, God gives the oil of joy for mourning the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness and all those who are walking with the Lord in the light with God and resting in his perfect will even if it means prison they find his joy because you see God is no man's debtor mourning turns to joy heaviness turns to praise with the person in the heart of the person who is accepting the circumstances of life as from the hand of God my own son Ian taught me a lesson in this some

years ago he was there in northern France in a city teaching in a school he was the only Christian in the city he was the only Christian in that part of northern France he couldn't find any more ever such a long way away and he hadn't got a car to move around on and so he had to on a Sunday he had a morning meeting on his own on the beach he used to walk up and down the beach talking to the Lord and then Sunday evening he had another meeting on his own with the Lord on the beach and he was there for months and months and months with no Christian fellowship and he was rejoicing in the Lord he was accepting all these new and perhaps trying experiences as from the Lord and he wrote us most wonderful letters in that trying time he had because his joy was not in his circumstances but in the

Lord and the Lord's presence that was made known to him do you remember I was telling you the other day that in Nehemiah's time God made the people rejoice with great joy so his exhortation is rejoice in the Lord now my daughter writing to me from Glasgow the other day put a verse of scripture at the bottom of her letter Habakkuk 3 and verse 18 and it was because she is very hard up having just got married spent all her money and right at the beginning you know they find it difficult to make ends meet but of course she is not concerned she is very very happy and this is the proof of it though the fig tree shall not blossom and there shall be no herbs in the store and this that and the other yet will I rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of my salvation well now the apostle not only

exhorts people to rejoice in the Lord in chapter 3 and verse 1 and again in chapter 4 and verse 4 but he gives his own experience of it talking about rejoicing in the Lord there is a beautiful hymn I don't know

whether it is in this book and if it is I am not sure whether we know the tune to it by A.

B. Simpson Dr. A. B.

Simpson once it was the blessing now it is the Lord in this materialistic age I am quite sure it is important for us to get away from things to the Lord himself and be taken up with him and rejoice in him the apostle speaks of his experiences of joy in the prayers he made in chapter 1 and verse 4 in every prayer of mine for you all making requests with joy are you joyful in your petitioning at the throne of grace are you happy before the Lord you are more likely to get answers to your prayers if you rejoice in the Lord when you are asking him for something and if one of my children came to me very, very mournfully and miserably and moaning and groaning and asked me for sixpence I wouldn't give it to them you see but if they came bouncing in and rejoicing and thanking me for what I gave

them last week and how they have been getting on and expressing real joy in our fellowship together Dad it is nice to be with you again what about sixpence he said shilling for you and he said I make my requests with joy get happy in the presence of the Lord and be joyful before the throne of grace not only in the prayers he made but in his preaching to others in chapter 1 and verse 18 I therein do rejoice yea and will rejoice that the preaching of others not to others the preaching of others was going forward while he was in prison and he found a lot of joy in that although even some of them were not doing it correctly insincerely Christ was preached and this was the burden of his heart and this made him rejoice before the Lord and the third his experience third experience of joy was in

the Philippians themselves chapter 1 and verse 4 shows us an illustration of this therefore my dearly beloved and long for my joy and my crown so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved you see how he loved them they were his joy now and they were his crown then at the judgment seat of Christ he was hoping to get the sole winners crown and reward for leading the Philippians to the Lord Jesus and finally in speaking about joy he gives his expectation of it in their unity in chapter 2 and verse 2 he says your unity spells my joy fulfill me my joy that you might be like minded in their blamelessness in chapter 2 and verse 15 that you may be blameless and harmless the sons of God that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not laboured in vain so as they developed into blamelessness

and spiritual maturity this again would bring great joy to him and thirdly in his expectation of it in their witness chapter 2 and verse 16 holding forth the word of life that I might rejoice in that always so the joy of the Lord is your strength and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost and here is the Apostle Paul in prison in Rome writing a letter to the friends he loves and he is really overflowing with joy not in his circumstances but in his wonderful Saviour and he was exhorting them to do the same may the Lord bless to us his word let us pray we praise thee for gathering us together into thy presence this morning our Father thank you for leading us by thy Holy Spirit and we pray that thy Holy Spirit shall always lead us in the line of thy will so that whatever

the circumstance our joy might be in the Lord and that we shall find our satisfying portion in him the Lord is the portion of my soul therefore hope thou in him Lord Jesus we turn to thee and ask that thou would make thyself so real to us that when we pray we shall rejoice before thee and when we seek thy guidance we shall rejoice to go thy way and do thy will that when we are called upon to suffer and have a time of testing we shall similarly be found rejoicing in thee even while the difficulties still abound knowing that thou wilt bring us through except of our thanks for fellowship together around thy word and for the memory of our dear departed brother Paul who was so very human and yet so spiritually mature being able to say for to

me to live is and as we close we ask that Christ

shall be manifest in our mortal flesh and magnified in our bodies whether it be by life or by death for his name's sake Amen

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