

Roger Phipps

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Preacher: Roger Phipps

[0 : 00] While you're turning to the book of Philippians, please, I'm going to begin by reading chapter 1, verses 9 through 11.

Philippians chapter 1, verses 9 through 11 will be our beginning. It will not be the totality. I'll get to that in a moment.

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

Father, I thank you for this day. I thank you for this time with our church family. I pray now, Lord, that your word speak to our hearts. Help us be an encouragement one to another to edify the body so that we are built up in the nurture and the admonition of our Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to trust you.

Help me to obey you. For all these things, we give you praise and we thank you for your great condescension, the gift of the Lord Jesus to earth to be sin for me so that I can be righteousness in him.

[1 : 47] Amen. It's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Amen. I am going to, with or without your leave, but I know that you're going to give me leave, I'm going to carry out this metaphor, if I may, in verse 11.

Amen. Having been filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes through Jesus Christ. Now, having said that, in order to expose the theme and to carry the metaphor, I'll not be reading audibly every verse, nor will I read all the verses in the order they appear in the book.

It will, as it ever is, be our individual responsibilities to see that the themes carried out are in line with the context of God's word, right?

That'll be our individual responsibilities. But in order to carry out the metaphor a little bit, I wanted to see what the theme runs through.

We in this church family are very used to a verse-by-verse exposition, and that's the way I like it, frankly.

[3 : 13] But when you get one shot, sometimes I need to see a theme running through. So I'm going to carry out that whole fruit of righteousness.

Now, having said that, we understand that metaphors, similes, are for the purpose of explanation or illustration.

They are not for the purpose of the teaching itself. Let me reiterate that. The purpose of a metaphor isn't for me to take the metaphor and try to extrapolate from that all these other things.

The fruit of righteousness, I don't try to tell you about how apples grow, and that means that this or that is spiritually true. It breaks down.

All metaphors break down. They're just for the purpose of illustrating a point at the time. And here, Paul uses it. This is one of, I think, twice that Paul uses the fruit of righteousness.

[4 : 27] The Lord in the Old Testament used it at least once in his chastening of Israel. But we will follow that, keeping in mind that we are going to study the word individually and see if these things be true.

With that in mind, the theme runs somewhat like this. I'm going to start in chapter 3 a little bit. And it's going to be, beware, the fruit of righteousness does not procure heaven.

Jesus Christ does that. And he alone. My salvation will be through Christ, not through my works. Then, I'm going to come back, produce the fruit of righteousness.

My conduct does matter. Cultivate the fruit of righteousness, following Christ's example. And observe good examples of the fruit of righteousness.

Follow Paul's and Timothy's and others' examples. We'll see that as it goes. Chapter 3. I'm going to start at verse 2. As you follow, and I know you will, but as you follow, you'll see that I'm going to skip some of it.

[5 : 47] Not for the point of trying to ignore it. That's not the point. But if we're going to get through the whole book of Philippians, we're going to have to follow a theme through.

Chapter 3, verse 2. Beware the evil workers, the false circumcision, for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

Although I myself might have some confidence in the flesh. Verse 5. Circumcise the eighth day of the nation. Here the apostle tells why he would have some confidence in the flesh.

Of the nation of Israel, the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law, a Pharisee, as to zeal, a persecutor of the church, as to the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.

However, whatever things were gained to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Going to verse 9. That I may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.

[7 : 09] I put this in here so that I put it in the beginning, because as we carry through the theme of my conduct matters, I don't want to be left without the understanding that my conduct matters, but it does not determine my destiny.

My eternal destiny rests in the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross, his death, burial, and resurrection. That and that alone makes me righteous.

All my righteousness is as, help me with this, filthy rags before God. You know, you know some individuals who bank on the idea, well, I believe in God, and when I stand before God, he's going to see that I've been basically good.

But if my name was not in the book of life, and I did stand or do stand before the white throne judgment, I am not going to be judged on the basis of your righteousness versus mine.

I'm not going to be based, I'm not going to be judged upon the basis of whether I've done more good than evil, or just how good I've been and I haven't been as bad as some people.

[8 : 44] I'm going to be based upon the righteousness of the holy God. If I want to be judged by my works, I will be.

But I don't want to be judged by my works. So I want to make that clear right from the beginning, that if I don't want to stand there, I want to be written in the Lamb's book of life.

I want to stand before Christ to be judged on my actions. Well, I don't even want that, but that's the way it's going to be anyway. But I want it done in the flesh, but not on the basis of whether I go to heaven or not.

Or not for the purpose of judging whether I go to heaven or not. Maybe that's what I mean. But rather, I want to stand in the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ.

That's my only hope of salvation. So I get that out of the way in the very beginning. Now, notice a couple of things, though. We see in there, in that passage, that good behavior and good intentions are all reckoned as loss.

[10 : 09] Now, frequently, not you, but I have heard that verse lifted from this context and used to say, well, that means that you reckon that worldly goods are a loss for the sake of knowing Christ.

Right? Take the world, but give me Jesus. Well, that's true, but that's not the real point of this. The point of this, that all my personal righteousness, my good intentions, notice what he says, circumcised the eighth day.

That is obedience to the Mosaic law, is it not? Circumcised on the eighth day, and it's the sign of the covenant for Israel.

Tribe of Benjamin. So his obedience, his circumstance or his heritage of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews.

As to the law of Pharisee, very strict in his behavior. As to zeal, a persecutor of the church. Those are good intentions. That's good behavior and good intentions.

[11 : 23] All of those I count as what? Loss. For the sake of knowing Christ. As my Savior. Now, I wanted to make that clear in the beginning, so that I don't get confused later on, as I see how this pans out.

However, neither does the fact that my good intentions aren't good enough, my good behavior isn't good enough.

So, therefore, my only hope is in Christ. That doesn't mean that my behavior doesn't mean anything. You know someone who says that.

So, let's roll back, if you will. Let's go back to chapter 1. And we'll start this. Producing the fruit of righteousness. Now, the reason I'm going to do it this way, again, is to see how that theme works out.

Because Paul digresses a number of times. In all the epistles, you see this, too. You see a passage that speaks to this issue.

[12 : 49] Then he gives a passage that speaks about God, or about my position in Christ, or about, in some of the cases, about his personal position.

You see that there in Philippians. But those are other themes this one will pull. So, bear with me if you will.

This will be all through, but starting with chapter 1, verse 6. I'm confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

I'm thankful for that promise. I am thankful for that. Verse 9. This I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge, real knowledge, and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

Let's go down to verse 27 and skip the digression for now. Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel, standing firm in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

[14 : 23] Now, we continue the theme in chapter 2, verse 12. So then, my beloved, just as you've always obeyed, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, so that do all things without grumbling or disputing, so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life.

Now, let's back up and look at a couple of those, if you will, please.

In verse 9 of chapter 1. Well, I'm going to take it, I'm going to take verses 9 through 11.

This I pray that your love may abound, still more and more in emphasis on real knowledge and discernment, so that the knowledge and discernment, so that you may approve, we'll get to a couple of these words, the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ, having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

[16 : 08] So, the first thing that sticks out to me is that good theology should produce good behavior.

It ought to follow hand in hand. My conduct should follow after what I believe to be true, should it not? Now, a couple of the words.

That word approve in verse 10. It's literally, it is to put to the test or examine. So that you may put to the test or examine those things that are excellent or the literal word there, those things which differ. You're familiar with a title by that name, are you not? Your knowledge and discernment are there so that I may put to the test those things that differ.

The idea being those things which carry through. And so that I can be sincere that is examined in full light or transparent as opposed as opposed to opaque or hidden or deceptive.

[17 : 43] You know, he uses that he uses that once in a while to say that our gospel came to you in sincerity not in deceitfulness.

You got that from 1 Corinthians and a couple of other times he mentions to some other churches that. That is, the gospel is simple and it's transparent and our lives, my life, should be simple and transparent.

I should be what I appear to be. And that's going to come because I'm going to be able to discern and put to the test the things that differ.

The things that are that are what shall I say? The things that are non-negotiables in terms of the gospel, the things that are non-negotiables and the things in Romans chapter 14 for instance that are that are said items of doubtful disputation.

that is, some things are of from personal some items in my life are because I have a personal view about it but they are not items that I that I should determine whether it's truth or not truth whether this should be doctrine.

[19 : 14] that check Romans chapter 14 for an explanation of that but he's the blameless there by the way doesn't mean that I am practically without any sin and here we get into into the way Paul uses it.

I want to be careful because Paul well God through the apostle Paul uses the term sin in several ways the same way we commonly would use it.

A sin being a transgression literally it's any missing of the mark. So sin in terms of whether or not I am saved sin has to do with any missing of the righteousness and glories and perfections of God. Therefore all men are sinners. I'm born in sin. I don't attain to that. Therefore I must have a Savior. He also uses it to mean sin to be an offense. That is I said something to you that I ought not have said. That's also the way it's used.

[20 : 41] Here he's blameless literally means not to strike against or not to stumble over. The blameless doesn't have to do with I am practically perfect in this life.

That's not what he means by blameless. He means I am not striking against well here especially a moral law. I'm not running up against it.

By the way you don't know anyone like this but when I was a teenager one of the things especially when I was a teenager I won't admit to it after that one of the things we always wanted to know from our Bible teachers was how far can you go before it's wrong.

You've never encountered that I know but that's what he's saying you don't want to be you don't want to be blameless you want to be blameless you don't want to always be banging on the fence. I don't want to be some of you have raised cattle and sheep when you go or you have been by a pasture field where is the path always worn right around the edge right why because they're always testing to see where the opening is we kind of treat God that way sometimes you want to be sincere and blameless on the day and the way you do that is or I pray that your love abound still more and more in knowledge and discernment so that you can put to the test those things which differ in order to be sincere and blameless and then verse 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness righteousness through Jesus Christ and this of course is to God's glory and God's praise now verse 27 is where I went next with the conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel

[23 : 04] I want to emphasize that worthy there again does not mean deserving of the gospel that is preached is the gospel of salvation by God help me with it please by grace through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God which is the grace part so conducting myself in a manner worthy of the gospel has nothing to do with being deserving of heaven because I don't deserve heaven otherwise grace is not if it's a payment for my good behavior Paul says otherwise grace is not grace it's not a gift if it's owed to me is it but we know that it's a gift so it's not owed to me

I can't be good enough I can't earn it conducting myself in a manner worthy of the gospel has to do with appropriately weighty or behaving in a manner that is commensurate with what I say I believe he says conduct yourself that way in a manner worthy of the gospel standing firm in one spirit this term standing firm if you would please turn to Ephesians chapter 4 there is no Ephesians 14 chapter 4 verse 14 thank you for helping me there there Ron was saying what what versions he is Ephesians chapter 4 this standing firm if you've read that verse and I know you have so far and you've read it even in its context this having been filled with the fruit of righteousness

I'm still in Philippians we're getting to Ephesians which comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel so that whether I come or not I will hear that you are standing firm in one spirit this word of this term standing firm or this phrase is used frequently through the apostle Paul and it's in glaring opposition to the picture that he gives of the immature Christian there in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 14 where God says as a result of the body of the body being in its context you'll see this the body becoming mature he gave some as apostles some for the building up of the body until we all become a mature man as a result of the body of Christ becoming mature we are no longer to be children now he mixes metaphors here you you instructed your children and if you you taught school you instructed them not to mix the metaphors when they wrote but

Paul does it anyway so we're going to go with Paul we're no longer to be children tossed here and there by waves carried about by every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men or by craftiness and deceitful scheming now this is the opposite picture to the mature Christian standing firm do I see that I'm not to be a child as it were and then he changes the metaphor to kind of like the ship tossed about by every wave by every wind of doctrine or by the trickery of men incidentally that word trickery that word trickery is a cube it's what we would use in a game of chance we called them dice now the trickery he's talking about here is or the word picture maybe

I'll give it that the word picture here is that the immature Christian is with the word of God is with doctrine as the die is with a game of chance he tosses here he tosses there sometimes comes up with this sometimes comes up with that and never really settled do I see that word picture the he says we're not to be that way we are to settle in and stand firm in the gospel so that we're not swept around all over the place back to Philippians chapter two I know that I'm skipping through so it's hard to follow so we'll Philippians chapter two let's go back to verses 12 through 16 here so then my beloved just as you have always obeyed work out your salvation now

[29 : 04] I know I've lifted this from context pardon me it goes within the context of the kenosis of the Lord Jesus the emptying of Christ earlier in the chapter so that's important to keep it in mind because he's saying just like Christ humbled himself so then work out your salvation here's why you already know why it's important to remember where that belongs because salvation is not by how you work that's not what he's talking about he's saying so then practically apply what you believe to your lifestyle your lifestyle Roger ought to follow what you say you believe you ought to be who you are you ought to be who you are if you say you trust Christ Jesus told the Pharisees what if you say you are sons of Abraham then you ought to act like

Abraham do the works of your fathers unfortunately they were now back to the point work out your salvation with fear and trembling do all things without grumbling or disputing verse 14 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent there it is again huh children of light or children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom that is among that generation you appear as lights holding fast to the word of God the working out your salvation is first of all the working out of my salvation is to be done with fear and trembling this is not where I say it's okay for me in your face I'm going to show you the liberties

I have that's exactly opposite of what he says in fact he uses Christ as the example though he was God he humbled himself it's to be done within the context of fear and trembling or with fear and trembling and in the context of humility and conciliation and righteous living we see that in that in that flow but it's conciliation work it's conciliation regarding personal matters and personal treatment it is not to be used as conciliation for truth or toward truth that is if I promote within the church if I promote heterodoxy something outside the teaching of

Christ you are not to be conciliatory to that and say well that's okay it is not okay otherwise the apostle didn't take his own revelation because in Romans chapter 16 and here digress with me if you would please this one I'm right on Ron chapter 16 verses 17 through 18 now I urge you brethren keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you heard or learned and turn away from them that doesn't sound conciliatory it isn't regarding doctrine he said keep your eye on the people who cause problems and who teach things that are contrary to what

I taught you keep your eye on them and what turn away from it don't pay attention to them for such men are slaves not of our Lord Jesus Christ but of their own appetites and by their smooth speech their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspected and in first Corinthians chapter five verse eleven he said now when I wrote to you not to associate with this type of person you know and in the preceding verses he gave a list he said I didn't mean the people of the world because you would have to disappear from the world in order to do that he said but I meant this I wrote to you not to associate with any so called brother if he is an immoral person or covetous or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or a swindler don't even eat with such a one he said don't fellowship with a person who professes

[34 : 32] Christ but acts like this this big word by the way I mean this is a big stuff he's telling the Corinthian church he said I'm not talking about the world I'm talking about a brother who professes Jesus Christ he says he's your brother but he he's behaving in this fashion don't give him fellowship fellowship now I'm not going to carry that any further other than to say it's obvious to me that when he says work out your own salvation he is not talking about that my idea is the same as your idea

and I can get it apart from the word of God and it's okay it is not okay only the word of God is okay that's why he told he Paul told Timothy hey you be you be a careful workman rightly handle the word of truth you be diligent in it so

I need to but I do need to discern remember the approve the things that differ or discern or put to the test those things that differ I need to be able to discern between those matters which are orthodox or not orthodox those matters which are important and those matters which are maybe not just important those matters which are vital and those matters which are as he told in Romans chapter 14 of doubtful disputation that is those matters which are matters of personal view but may not really affect the gospel itself if I try to teach that the gospel is by works that's heterodoxy and that's not to be conciliated that's not to be acceptable if

I teach that the gospel is by grace only but that means that you need however you need to I think that Easter is the most important holiday and therefore you need to make a special deal of Easter and if you don't you're not really walking with the Lord well those are matters of doubtful disputation I need to be able to discern what the difference is now by the way any complaint is to be filed with the eldership so cultivating the fruit cultivate the fruit fruit now we go up to chapter 2 verses 3 through 8 do nothing this is how that soil is prepared that you sang about do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit but with humility of mind regard one another more important than yourselves don't merely look out for your own personal interest but also for the interest of others have this attitude in yourselves which is also in

Christ Jesus now he goes through who being in the form of God I'm going to go directly to verse 8 who although he was God he being found in the appearance of the man he humbled himself by becoming obedient even to the point of death the death on the cross humility well do nothing from see the selfishness and empty conceit is juxtaposed it's set opposite in this phrasing with the spirit of humility either your King James wrote that empty conceit as vainglorious and literally that's the word empty glory vainglorious that is don't do things from my own for my own personal glory or to puff myself up but he said have this attitude rather than you need to be important you count others more important than yourself

Roger and you have a humility of mind or that's what the humility of mind is and here is one of the few times by the way in scripture that we are told to follow Christ's example this is one of the ways we are told to follow Christ's example sometimes I try to make up my own ways to follow Christ's example instead of doing what he actually told me to do this is what he tells me to do now observe the good examples of the fruit let's go if you will please to chapter 3 in Philippians and I'm going to start with verse 17 I'm going to read I'll tell you ahead of time and you can take it within its context verses 17 20 and chapter 4 verse 1 because chapter 4 verse 1 really sums up chapter 3 it belongs in my opinion it belongs with chapter 3 or it runs the thought of chapter 3 brethren now this is the apostle talking but

[40 : 49] I need to hear what he says brethren join in following my example and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us because if you will our citizenship is in heaven from which this is verse 20 from which we also eagerly await for our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ now chapter 4 verse 1 my beloved brethren whom I long to see my joy and my crown in this way stand firm in the Lord go to chapter 4 verse 9 if you will the things you have heard and received or learned and received and heard and seen in me practice these things and the

God of peace will be with you now this was for me as I was studying a pretty heavy statement here in this last thing about observe the fruit they remembered Paul and Timothy I don't know who else may have been involved certainly Paul and Timothy because that's who he mentions in his greeting they received the letters and he said to them attend those or attend to those and follow the pattern of those who follow my pattern I thank God for those godly examples that he put into my life to show me what how it looks to practically apply the gospel do

I behave in a manner that should someone look to me as an example they won't be led wrong they'll be led aright that's weighty for me and I think it ought to be because it matters he said observe what you saw me doing this is what it looks like when it's practically where the rubber hits the road you know it's one thing to describe it's one thing to describe the planting the preparation of the ground and the planting of the corn and the growing of the corn and the harvest of the corn it's another matter to get into the field isn't it he said this is what it really looks like to do it when your fathers and your mothers taught you how to run your homes they had you working beside them they didn't say go out and wash the dish or go out and dig you know go out and clean the pen the first well they did

later but but at first they took you with them right well this is the picture that he gives he said observe those who follow the example that you saw me give and follow that example and then verse nine

I'll leave with first well I'm going to back up and go that in this way verse one of chapter four he has given all this this is a summation of chapters especially chapters two and three and then he said it's in this way that you can stand firm in the Lord there's that term again the second time he said there's this is a way this way you stand firm by the way it's important for me it's important for me to practice those things which are standing firm it's important for me to practice those things daily when the light is shining because when the days get dark isn't the time to learn the lesson when the days get dark the lesson stands us in good stead doesn't it our hope and our faith and our trust in the

Lord are going to shine out in fact in Peter I can't remember I think it's in 1 Peter where he says always be ready to give an account for the hope that is in you I pray that that hope shows through in daily life and when the days are dark so that people have a reason to question hey why do you have hope times are tough the time to learn the lesson is in practice not when I'm on the field to change the metaphor isn't it you don't learn the game in the field you learn it in practice and you apply it to the field too many too many times too many times

[47 : 04] I rely on determination and not enough on preparation maybe so prepare operate this way in this way stand firm verse nine I want to leave with this those things which you have learned and received and heard and seen in me practice these things and the God of peace will be with you I'm not going to try to expose that let's ponder that one this afternoon those things you have heard and seen in me practice these things and the God of peace will be with you have a blessed day