

Quarter One: Uniting Heaven & Earth: Christ in Philippians & Colossians

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Lesson 3—Life and Death

Thursday: United & Fearless

January 15, 2026

- **Last Week:** “Reasons for Thanksgiving & Prayer”
 - Phil 1:1 – 18; Col 1:1 – 12
 - Paul’s prayer & thanksgiving in both Philippians & Colossians
 - Lessons for our prayer life with God
- **This Week:** “Life and Death”
 - Phil 1:19 - 30
 - Death is not part of life: it’s the enemy of life.
 - While we live, in whatever time is allotted to us, goal = make biggest impact possible for Christ

Memory Text: “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil 1:21, NKJV)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** “Christ Will Be Magnified” (James)
 - Phil 1:19, 20 – Paul’s desire to serve Jesus in whatever condition he was in – to spend & be spent for others
- 2. **Monday:** To Die Is Gain (John L.)
 - Phil 1:21, 22 – Paul’s submission to the will of God for his life (not “might makes right” but “right makes might”)
- 3. **Tuesday:** Being Confident (SQ)
 - Phil 1:23 - 26 – Paul’s willingness to face martyrdom or fruitful labor for God (whatever God chose); also Biblical understanding of state of the dead
- 4. **Wednesday:** Stand Fast in Unity (Ryan)
 - Phil 1:27 – unity in the church as believers: need to humble ourselves & remove that pride so we can love others and labor in unity
- 5. **Thursday:** United and Fearless (Jill)
 - Phil 1:27 – 30 – unity of believers in mission & message; fearlessness when we follow Jesus & trust His sovereignty

Thursday: United and Fearless

Phil 1:27 – 30; Mark 3:25; Rev 12:17; 14:16; John 17:17, 19; 1 Pet 3:13; Matt 10:38; Acts 14:22; Rom 8:17; 2 Tim 3:12

- **Unity & Suffering, Part 2:** continuation of Wed’s lesson
- Phil 1:27 – “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,”

- Unity in the body of Christ
 - John 17:17 – “Sanctify them by your truth, Your Word is truth”
 - Jesus is the Word (John 1:1, 14)
 - Jesus is the Truth (John 14:6)
 - Unity comes through Jesus & His Word
 - 1 John 1:7 – “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”
 - Jesus unites us as believers
- Stand fast in “one spirit” – stand without division
 - Satan = the author of division
 - Mark 3:25 – “If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”
 - Division in the church
 - Community
 - Country
 - Families / ministries / places of work
- **Takeaway #1:** Unity in Jesus & unity of message enables us to be united in mission
 - Rev 14:6 – united in proclaiming the everlasting gospel
- Phil 1:28 – “and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.”
 - **Takeaway #2:** We don’t need to be afraid of opposition
 - We don’t need to be afraid of persecution or threats
 - **Takeaway #3:** We don’t need to be afraid of death
 - Heb 2:14, 15 – “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, (15) and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”
 - Christ faced death & won to break the power of Satan
 - & to release us from fear of Satan, sin & death
- Phil 1:29, 30 – “For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, (30) having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.”
 - **Takeaway #4:** Salvation is a gift
 - “Granted on behalf of Christ to believe in Him”
 - Eph 2:8 – by grace we have been saved through faith....it is the gift of God
 - **Takeaway #5:** Suffering is a gift
 - “Granted on behalf of Christ to suffer for His sake”
 - **A. God can work all things for good**
 - 2 Cor 13:8 – “For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.”
 - Gen 50:20 – what Satan intended for evil, God turned around for good
 - Joseph to his brothers

▪ **B. Suffering grows our character**

- James 1:2 – testing of our faith produces patience
- James 1:12 – “Blessed is the man who endures **temptation** for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”
 - Temptation = Gk, trials or temptation
- Rom 5:3, 4 – “And not only that, but we also glory in **tribulations**, knowing that tribulation produces **perseverance**, (4) and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”
 - Tribulations = *thlip*’-sis = internal pressure, as opposed to external
 - Perseverance = 2 Gk words “under” & “remain / endure” = remaining or enduring under
- 1 Pet 1:6, 7 – “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials. (7) That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, maybe found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
 - Trials do not make faith genuine; yet, no genuine faith will exist without them
 - Trials strengthen our faith thru purification by fire
 - Trials reveal a deeper dependance on God’s strength, rather than self-reliance

▪ **C. Sometimes, suffering is for a bigger purpose**

- Phil 1:19 – “For I know that this will turn out for my **deliverance** through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”
 - Deliverance – usually translated “salvation”
- Rom 8:17 – “and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”
- 2 Tim 3:12 – “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

○ **Takeaway #6: Look to Jesus**

- Heb 12:1, 2 – “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (2) looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”
 - Look to Jesus
 - Not self or sin
 - Not hurts and slights from others
 - Not pain from health, finances, family
 - The end is in sight

6 Takeaways on Unity & Suffering from Phil 1

- #1: Unity in Jesus & unity of message enables us to be united in mission
- #2: We don't need to be afraid of opposition
- #3: We don't need to be afraid of death
- #4: Salvation is a gift
- #5: Suffering is a gift
 - A. God can work all things for good
 - B. Suffering grows our character
 - C. Sometimes, suffering is for a bigger purpose
- #6: Look to Jesus

“From the rack, the stake, the dungeon, from dens and caves of the earth, there falls upon His ear the martyr's shout of triumph. He [the Savior] hears the witness of steadfast souls, who, though destitute, afflicted, tormented, yet bear fearless, solemn testimony for the faith, declaring, 'I know whom I have believed.' These, yielding up their lives for the faith, declare to the world that He in whom they have trusted is able to save to the uttermost.” (AA, p. 512)