

**BROKEN CHAINS**  
**The Philippian Series #11**  
June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**TEXT:** Philippians 2:19-30

**CONSIDER THIS:** In today's text a great misconception many Christians have about Paul is laid to rest. It is easy to read what Paul says in Philippians 4:4-13 about **joy, peace** and **contentment** and conclude that Paul was so different from us that he was some kind of "super Christian" who never struggled with his emotions and who was never discouraged by his circumstances. That misconception deceives us into believing that we have no real chance to consistently experience the freedom of BROKEN CHAINS (chains = worry, anger, hopelessness, bitterness, sorrow, fear, depression, guilt, shame, pride, selfishness, regret). Yet in this text Paul reveals his own struggles, and as we study carefully we make this important discovery: Entering into the victorious Christian life where the promises of Philippians 4 are consistently experienced **is a process that takes time**. It is a journey filled with bumps, potholes and pits. But if you take to heart what God's Word teaches here a wonderful sound will reach your ears ... the sound of your chains breaking!

- I     **THERE IS A PROCESS**
- II    **UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS**
- III   **TRUST THE PROCESS**
- IV    **EMBRACE THE PROCESS**

**GOD'S WORD TEACHES US ...**

**I     THERE IS A PROCESS**

**Note:** Two of Paul's statements in this section of Philippians must be carefully investigated for the purpose of understanding our own struggles:

1. "to spare me sorrow upon sorrow" (2:27B)
2. "and I may have less anxiety" (2:28B)

These are genuinely painful emotions pertaining to the difficulty of Paul's circumstances and his friendship with Epaphroditus.

- A) Christianity is not about instant gratification, it is about a journey designed by God to produce the character of Christ in His people (Philippians 2:5, 13).
- B) The Christian life is a process of:
  1. Growth (Ephesians 4:15-16)
  2. Refinement (Zechariah 13:9)
  3. Learning (II Peter 3:18)

Christian, God wants to pour out the promises of Philippians 4 upon you. He is not stingy! But there is a process ...

## II UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS

- A) God is a full-time teacher. Every circumstance and experience He permits to come into your life comes with a lesson He wants to teach (Mark 4:35-41).
- B) Christian, be a full-time student (II Corinthians 1:8-9; Philippians 4:12-13).

## III TRUST THE PROCESS

- A) Painful circumstances and disappointing relationships can easily cloud your vision and cause you to foolishly question God's goodness = "Teacher, don't you care if I drown?"
- B) Trusting the process is actually about trusting God – His love, His wisdom, His kindness, His power, His purposes, His promises (see John 14:1-11, 27).

Don't let the things you know  
be shaken by the things you don't know ...

Don't doubt in the dark the things  
that God showed you in the light.

## IV EMBRACE THE PROCESS

- A) Remember, the Christian life and the ability to experience the Philippians 4 promises result from a process; a process which can be difficult. God is a full-time teacher and the circumstances He ordains for us are intended to grow us, refine us, teach us, and conform us to the likeness of Christ. We can trust the process because He is trustworthy.
- B) Paul shows us what it means to embrace the process in Philippians 3:10-14 and II Corinthians 12:7-10.

**APPLICATION:** When faced with life's challenges, when assailed by painful emotions, when held captive by circumstances that you would not have chosen, when you have **chains that need to be broken**, make and carry out (with the strength of Christ which is within you) these four commitments:

1. I will remember there is a process
2. I will be a full-time student and learn the lessons He is teaching me
3. I will trust the Teacher, for He loves me
4. I will imitate my Savior

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