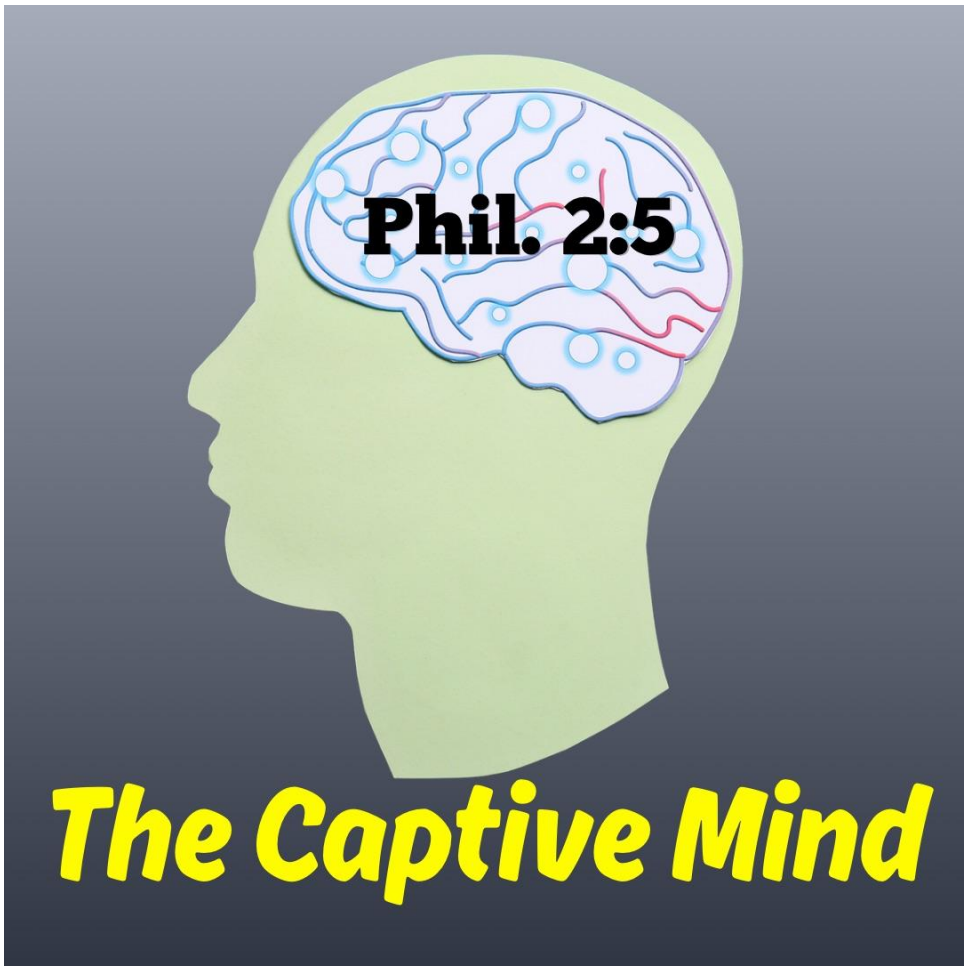
Basic Training Bible Ministries
Presents

"The Stability of the Captive Mind
A Study of the Book of Philippians in Outline Form



Westside Bible Church
Glendale, Arizona
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A Study in the Book of Philippians
"The Stability of the Captive Mind"

Introduction
1. The Book of Philippians is often referred to as the "Book of Joy."
2. More accurately, it is the "Book of the Captive Mind (2 Cor. 10:3–6).
3. In this epistle, Paul speaks of "mind," "minded," "like-minded" 11 times, and of "think" or "thinking" 3 times. The key to joy is Spirit-controlled thinking!
4. Although "joy/rejoicing" is mentioned 21 times, it comes from a spiritual mind.

I. Chapter One—The Single Mind
The focus is the Gospel message.
Key verses are 27–30.

> *"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good* [single: *haplous,* opposite of *diplous*; *haplous* is used only here in the Greek New Testament], *your whole body will be full of light."* Matthew 6:22

A. The Fellowship of the Gospel (vv. 1–11)
1. It begins in joyful prayer (vv. 3–5).
2. It proceeds from inner transformation (v. 6)
3. It leads to active engagement in ministry (v. 7).
4. It is sustained by the love of Christ (vv. 8–9).
5. It results in fruitful lives (vv. 10–11).

Application: Paul kept the Philippians in his mind (vv. 1–6), in his heart (vv. 7–8), and in his prayers (vv. 4, 9–11).

B. The Furtherance of the Gospel (vv. 12–26)
1. In victory over adversity (vv. 12–14). *"Furtherance"*: *prokopto* = "to blaze a trail."
2. In victory over false brethren (vv. 15–17).
3. In victory over jealousy, contention (v. 18).

Application: Paul put Christ first (vv. 12–21), others second (vv. 22–26), and himself last (vv. 27–30).

C. The Faith of the Gospel (vv. 27–30)
1. Demands worthy conduct (v. 27a; *axios,* "balance the scales," Eph. 4:1).
2. Displays a spiritual warrior ethos (v. 27b; *"stand fast," steko,* Eph. 6:10–12).
3. Demolishes enemy opposition (vv. 28–30).

Application: Paul exhorts us to worthy conduct that is:
1. Fearless in the face of adversity.
2. Convicting in the face of unbelief.
3. Exultant in the face of persecution.

II. Chapter Two—The Servant Mind

The Focus is Jesus Christ.
Key verses are 5–11.

> *"For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves."* Luke 22:27

A. The Spirit of Humility (vv. 1–4)

(Selfless: *"consolation ... comfort ... fellowship ... affection ... mercy."*)

1. First of all, it is *"in Christ."*
2. Secondly, it is *"of the Spirit."*
3. Third, it is not *"of selfish ambition."*
4. Finally, it is *"for the interest of others."*

Application: Humility in action displays *"consolation ... comfort ... fellowship ... affection ... mercy."* The effects of this are *"joy ... love ... one accord* [unity]*."*

B. The Standard of Humility (vv. 5–11)

Christ conformity—Romans 12:1–2, down is up!

1. Jesus did not claim His divine rights (v. 6).
2. He stepped down from Heaven into a world of sin and death (v. 7).
3. He humbled Himself to die as a criminal—in our place (v. 8)
4. His self-humiliation received the Father's honor (vv. 9–11).

Application: *"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time"* (1 Pet. 5:6).

C. The Sacrifice of Humility (vv. 12–18)

God works within, while we are to *"work out."*

1. It results in obedience (v. 12a).
2. Obedience works out what God is always working within (vv. 12b–13).
3. This produces believers who *"shine as lights in* [a dark] *world"* (vv. 14–15).
4. Such believers bring rejoicing to their pastors and will receive eternal reward from the Chief Shepherd (vv. 16–18; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 22:12).

Application: *"Whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls"* (1 Peter 1:8–9).

D. The Service of Humility (vv. 19–30)

Timothy and Epaphroditus our examples.

1. In this chapter, we have the example of Christ (vv. 5–11), the example of Paul (vv. 12–18), and the example of Timothy and Epaphroditus (vv. 19–30).
2. *"A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher"* (Luke 6:40).

<u>Application</u>: Nothing can ignite the Word and the Spirit in the lives of believers like living examples who reflect the character of Christ. We should be that to others!

<u>Review and Introduction to Chapters 3 and 4</u>:

1. Philippians is an epistle designed to create joy in the Christian life.
2. However, the foundation for this is the Spirit-filled mind.
3. The epistle proves Proverb 23:7, *"For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he."*
4. Chapter 3 illustrates Romans 8:6, *"For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."*
5. In Chapter 4, we learn that *"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a **sound mind**"* (2 Tim. 1:7).
6. Sound (spiritually healthy) minds come from understanding and applying sound doctrine. In Romans 5:1–5 we read, *"Therefore, having been justified by **faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in **hope** of the glory of God ... Now hope does not disappoint, because the **love** of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."* These three emphasized words encapsulate the entire theology of Paul. They outline the Book of Romans:
   a. Faith, Chapters 1–5
   b. Hope, Chapters 6–9
   c. Love, Chapters 12–16

III. <u>Chapter 3: The Spiritual Mind</u>

The focus is our eternal calling.
Key verses are 12–16.

> *"*[God sent His son] … *that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."* Romans 8:4–6

A. The Priority of the Spirit (vv. 1–11)

1. <u>No confidence in the flesh</u> (vv. 1–6)
   In these verses, Paul lists **six carnal achievements** of which he formerly boasted in his own accomplishments. These were the building blocks of his human achievements.

2. <u>All Confidence in the Spirit</u> (vv. 7–11)
   a. The words *"gain"* and *"loss*" are accounting terms, used of a merchant who sold things at a loss, so as to purchase something of much greater value. They reflect the twin parables of the hidden treasure and the great pearl (Matt. 13:44–46).
   b. Although Paul gave up six earthly achievements (the number of man), he gained **seven spiritual treasures** (the number of God's perfect provision):
      1) To gain Christ as Savior,
      2) To be found righteous in Him,

3) To know Christ experientially,
4) To live in His resurrection power,
5) To enter into the fellowship of His sufferings,
6) To be conformed to His death (bringing eternal life to others), and
7) To attain the resurrection out from the dead.

B. The Pursuit of the Spirit (vv. 12–16)

1. The spiritual perspective (vv. 12–13)
   "Not that I have already attained ... I press toward the goal for the prize ..." The prize here is to hear *"well done"* (Matt. 25:21, 23), and to gain *"the crown of righteousness"* (2 Tim. 4:8).

2. The spiritual pursuit (vv. 14–16)
   a. The *"goal"* here comes from *skopos*, used of the runner's fixed attention on the finish line of the race. We must learn to live life from the finished perspective!
   b. *"Let us walk by the same rule"* is *stoicheo*, "to march together in step, to walk according to a preset pace."

C. The Prize of the Spirit (vv. 17–21)

1. How it can be lost (vv. 17–19):
   These *"enemies of the cross of Christ"* (v. 18), are those who seek to minister out of *"selfish ambition"* (1:16). In the end, all self-serving ministry will hear Jesus say, *"They have their reward"* (Matt. 6:2, 5, 16), and will miss the reward they could have gained (1 Cor. 3:10–15).

2. How it can be gained (vv. 20–21):
   a. First, we must live for eternity, in the hope of Christ's return, *"Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"* (Titus 2:13).
   b. Secondly, we must diligently pursue inner transformation into Christ-conformity, which will be made complete in His presence (Rom. 8:29; 12:1–2).

IV. Chapter 4—The Secure/ Stable Mind

The focus is daily spiritual progress.
Key verses are 4–7.

"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is ***stayed*** *on You, because he trusts in You"* (Isa. 26:3; the Hebrew word *Samak* means "to lean on, to stand firm on, to be sustained by").

A. Secure in His Presence (vv. 1–5)

1. The unity of His presence (vv. 1–3)
   The *"same mind"* of v. 2 is Paul's attitude toward them in v. 1. They were his *"joy and crown."* He speaks here of the "Crown of Joy," which is the soul-winner's crown (1 Thess. 2:19–20). All church strife and division would disappear if we held this view.

2. The joy of His presence (vv. 4–5)
   Rejoice always ... *"The Lord is at hand."* What a difference it makes when believers actually live with the consciousness of the Lord's presence!

B. Secure in His Peace (vv. 6–9)

1. Entering into the **peace of God** (vv. 6–7)
   a. *"The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him"* (Psalm 34:7).
   b. *"In everything by prayer ... with thanksgiving ...* ***the peace of God*** *... shall guard."* The word *"guard"* is *phroureo*, used of a military garrison or soldiers on guard.

2. Dwelling with the **God of peace** (vv. 8–9)

   "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide
   under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1).

   a. The word *"meditate"* (or "think on") is *logizomai*, an accounting term, meaning "to take into account." It goes with *"the things ... you learned ... received ... heard ... and saw in me."* Paul could say, *"Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ"* (1 Cor. 11:1).
   b. *"The God of peace will be with you."* It is one thing to have *"**peace with God**"* (Rom. 5:1) that comes from salvation. It is a greater thing to have the *"**peace of God**"* (Phil. 4:7) that comes from spiritual growth. But the greatest of all is to have *"**the God of peace**"* (Phil. 4:9) present moment by moment, as we come to spiritual maturity.

C. Secure in His Power (vv. 10–13)

1. Power is the product of persistent practice! Here, Paul gives us a spiritual workout program for increasing our spiritual power. Note first that he *"**learned**"* to be content. Learning applied results in *"**know how**"* (i.e., spiritual skillsets). This will lead us to the say, *"**I can do** all things through Christ"* (unwavering confidence for the future).

2. Far too many Christians quote verse 13 without persisting in the "School of Christ." Only **Bible knowledge** translated into **daily experience** gives **confident capability**.

D. Secure in His Provision (vv. 14–23)

The above format follows into the closing verses of this great book.

1. The Philippians gave sacrificially to Paul's ministry (vv. 14–16).
2. This was the outward expression of their abounding spiritual fruit (vv. 17–18).
3. The divine response to their selfless giving was the assurance of the all-sufficient supply of their needs by God (vv. 19–20).

"Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down,
shaken together, and running over ... For with the same measure that you use,
it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38

"He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully ... And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you ... may have an abundance for every good work."
2 Corinthians 9:6, 8

Conclusion

What magnificent promises are made to all who are in Christ by faith! Also, what gracious provisions God has made for us to share in His sufferings and His glory! May we all strive to forget what is behind, and to press on to what lies ahead—to win the prize of our high and holy calling in Christ Jesus!