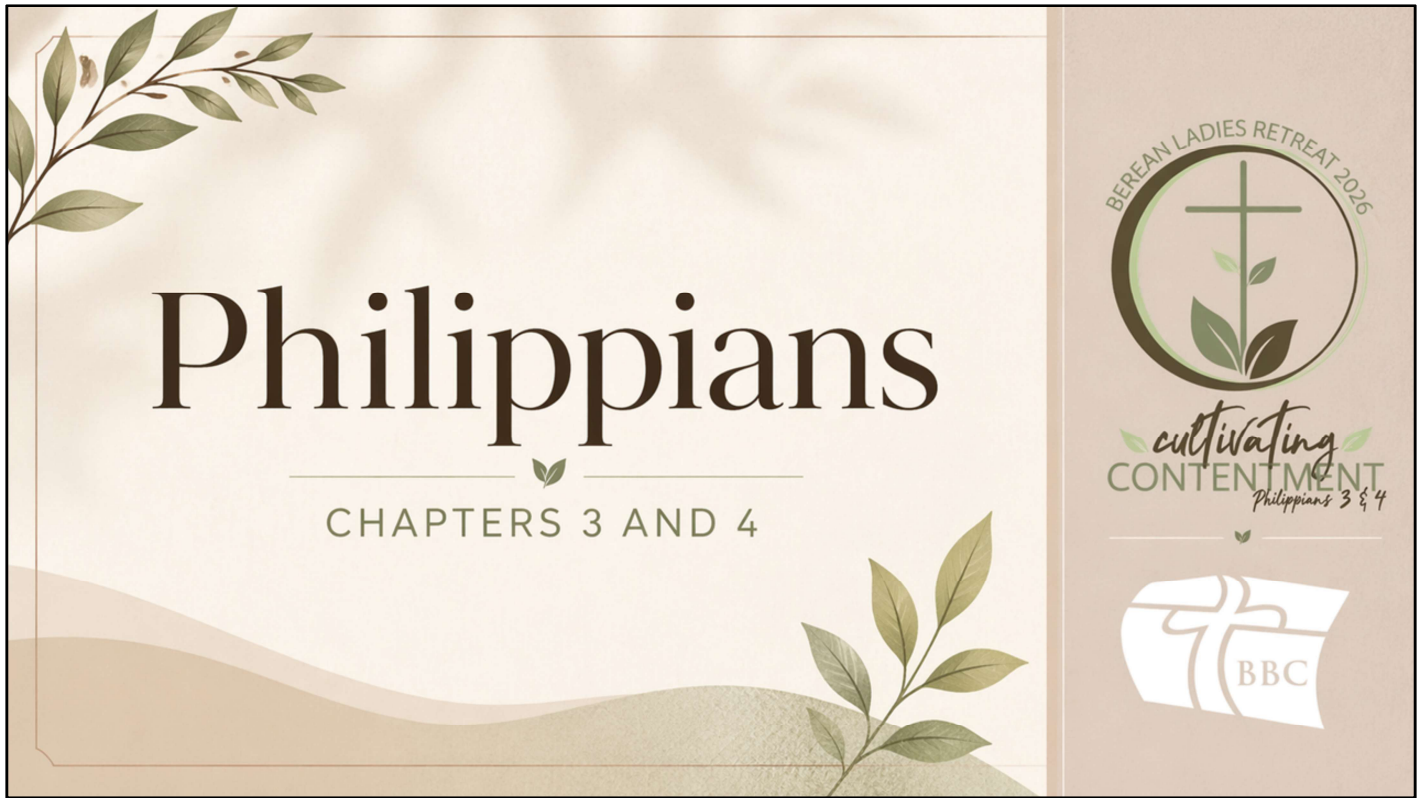


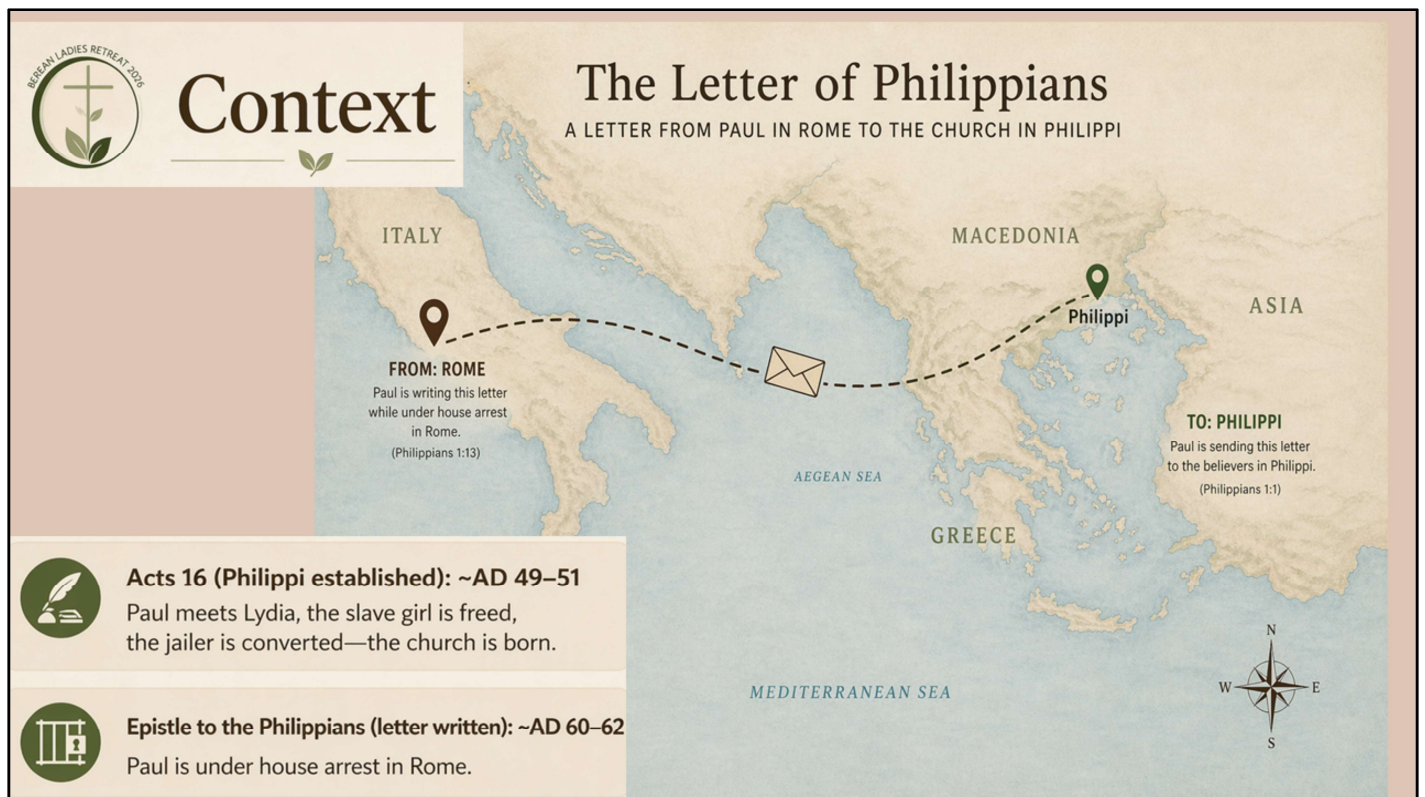
If we haven't met yet, my name is Lovina Goad and I'm so thankful to be here with you this morning. I am humbled by the opportunity, the blessing, to open up God's Word together with you and learn from the Lord---ultimately for His glory and our good.

We are going to open by reading Philippians Chapters 3 and 4 again. Let's read:  
PHILIPPIANS 3 and 4 (click)



Read aloud

Pray



Let's review the CONTEXT of this important epistle again:

Philippians was written by Paul the Apostle, likely around AD 60–62, while he was under house arrest in Rome. So even though he is in prison, the tone of this letter is JOYFUL and HOPEFUL. Paul actually uses the word “rejoice” sixteen times in this letter!

The audience is the church in Philippi, a city in Macedonia which is modern-day northern Greece. Philippi was a Roman colony—very proud of its Roman identity—so its people valued status, citizenship, and honor. That backdrop matters because Paul keeps pointing them to a greater citizenship—in heaven (Phil. 3:20) as Kelly spoke to us about last night.

Philippi was strategically located along the Via Egnatia, a major Roman road, making it influential and well-connected. Philippi's dominant belief system was Roman paganism, centered on emperor worship and reinforced by polytheism; there wasn't an established Jewish synagogue there, but there was a small population of Jews. The Christian church there began in Acts 16. I highly recommend taking a note to read Acts 16 if you haven't to know the full context. Give yourself some holy homework. :)

From the establishment of the Philippian church in Acts 16 to this letter to the

Philippians, it has been about 10-12 years: a decade of gospel-growth.

So, what makes this letter unique **is the relationship**. The Philippians were deeply partnered with Paul—they supported him financially when other churches did not. Also, this is not a corrective letter like some other epistles (1st Corinthians or Galatians); it's warm, personal, and affectionate.

So why did Paul write this epistle?

Paul, in prison, has just received a financial gift from the Philippian church, which was delivered by Epaphroditus.

He is writing:

To thank them for their gift

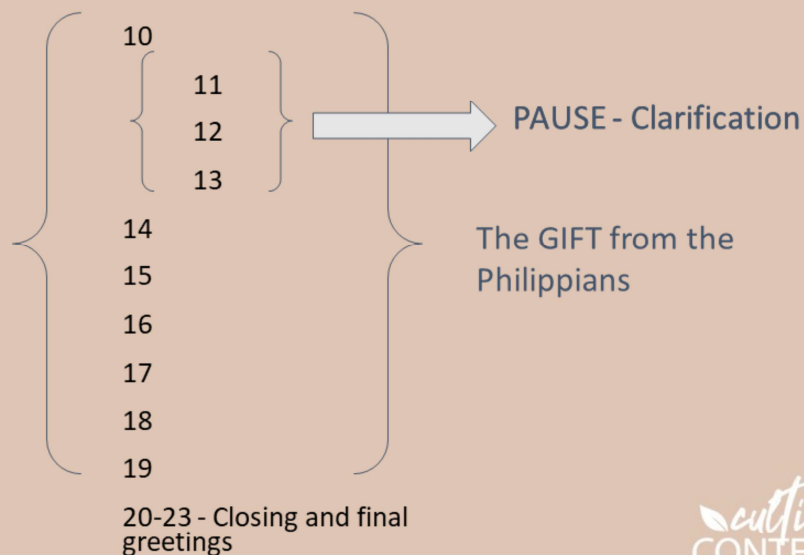
To encourage unity and humility

To warn against false teaching

And to show them how to live with joy and contentment in Christ, regardless of circumstances



## Paul's Thank-You Note: *With a Crucial Clarification!*



This morning, our focus is on Chapter 4 verses 10-23.

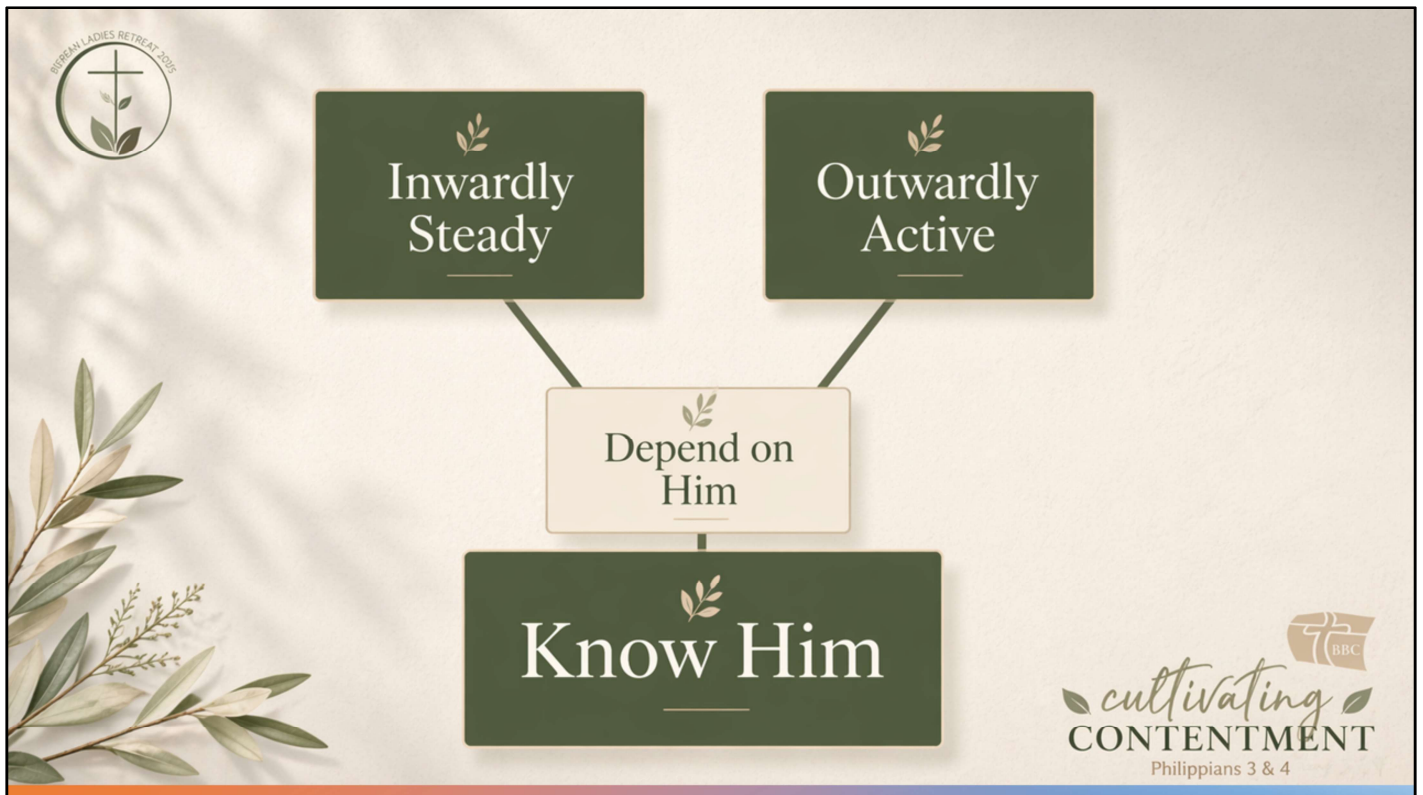
We will look at each verse and how the verses work together from idea to idea, noticing one particular organizational choice made by Paul as he writes. So let's look at the overall ORGANIZATION of this selection.

Paul begins thanking the Philippians for the gift in verse 10, but then he pauses in verses 11–13 to clarify something very important. Then in verse 14 he returns to writing their gift.

I see this section of Scripture kind of as “Paul’s Thank You Note: With a Crucial Clarification!” This is the “personal matter” he is ending the letter with.

So to repeat: Paul begins thanking them → he pauses to share an important detail → then resumes and concludes his overall letter.

Let's begin by looking at the MAIN TAKEAWAYS from this section.



Before we go any further, I want to show you where we're headed—because everything we're going to see today flows into this.

Paul says there is a secret to walking through every kind of circumstance—and we need to understand this: the secret is not a method... it's not a mindset... it's not something you achieve.

The secret is this: **dependence on Christ.**

Paul says, "I have learned the secret... I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." The strength is not coming from within him—it is coming from Christ.

But here's what we have to see—**you cannot depend on someone you do not know.**

So this kind of dependence is not shallow. It is rooted in a deep, growing, relational knowledge of Christ.

And when you truly know Him—and learn to depend on Him—it changes you in two directions:

**Inwardly**—you become steady. You are not tossed around emotionally, not ruled by circumstances, not reactive to lack or abundance. You learn to be content whether you are brought low or whether you are abounding.

**Outwardly**—you are not turned inward on yourself. You are freed to step into the work of the gospel—to give, to serve, to engage, to partner in what God is doing.

This is where we're going: **to know Him so deeply that we depend on Him fully—becoming steady inwardly and actively engaged in the gospel outwardly.**

So let's begin by looking at verse 10.



“I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. (v. 10)

1. Philippians have provided for Paul financially before and have provided again
  - Philippians 1:3-5, 4:15, 4:16, 4:18
2. This gift makes Paul rejoice “in the Lord greatly”
3. “Concern” - *phroneō*
4. “Had no opportunity”



In verse 10 Paul writes, “I **rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.**”

**Notice, he says he “rejoiced in the Lord greatly.”** From the start, we see that Paul’s joy is rooted in the LORD. Paul sees the fruit of the Philippian believers’ faith and their hearts of service make him rejoice in what the Lord is doing in and through them.

When Paul says they have “**revived their concern**,” he isn’t saying that they forgot about him. In this context, he means their concern and care for him didn’t disappear—it just lacked opportunity. What has ‘revived’ is not their love, but their tangible support—this financial gift that has FINALLY reached Paul here in prison in Rome.

It seems from the wording here that it had been a long time since the Philippians’ last gift to Paul, but again, this was not as a lack of concern—Paul recognizes it was not their fault because he says “you were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.” Maybe bad timing, maybe difficulty in traveling—a variety of factors, but Scripture doesn’t say exactly what prevented their gifts from getting to him. The

Philippians' support wasn't absent—it was delayed. Not because they didn't care, but because in God's providence, they didn't yet have the means or timing to support him.

We do see that the Philippians had partnered with Paul in providing for him financially earlier.

In Philippians Chapter 1 verses 3-5 Paul writes, "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, **because of your partnership in the gospel** from the first day until now."

Later in this chapter, verse 15, he says the Philippians were the only church to enter into "partnership with [him] in giving and receiving." They even sent "help for his needs once and again" in verse 16 when he was in Thessalonica. Now in context, he has finally just received in this chapter, verse 18, the Philippians' gift from Epahproditus— "I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied" Paul says.

So let's notice: "**You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.**" And look---they have finally had opportunity and they SEIZED upon it.

And this is what we need to see: the Christian life is not just about good intentions or quiet concern. It is about recognizing when God places an opportunity in front of you—and SEIZING it.

Let's keep moving to the next set of verses.



Not that I am speaking of being in need for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.  
(v. 11)

1. Conjunction: **NOT**

a. His REJOICING is NOT dependent upon their monetary gift

2. **“I have learned”** - *manthanō* - to learn through experience, instruction, or practice.

a. Same root behind the English word “mathematics”

3. **“Whatever situation”** - What *situations* has Paul been in?

a. 2 Corinthians 6:4–5

b. 2 Corinthians 11:23–28

4. **“Content”** - *autarkeia*



Let’s look closely at verse 11 - “Not that I am speaking of being in need for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.”

The first keyword I notice here is the word **NOT**. NOT is a conjunction. Conjunctions are like road signs in a sentence. When you’re driving, you don’t just stare at the road—you watch for signs that tell you when something is changing.

Conjunctions do that in Scripture.

They tell you, *‘Pay attention—something is shifting here.’*

they often signal a **change in direction, emphasis, or clarification**.

“Paul just said in verse 10, ‘I rejoiced greatly...’ and they might assume—*‘Oh, he’s just happy because they gave him money.’*”

And then he puts up a sign: **NOT**.

That word tells us: *“Don’t misunderstand me. I’m about to clarify what I really mean.”*

That one word protects us from misreading the entire passage.

He just said in verse 10 “I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me.” But right here, Paul **clarifies** to guard against the misleading thought that *his rejoicing is dependent on their money*. Their gift is **NOT** what he is DEPENDING upon.

Next, notice that Paul writes **“I have learned”** and grammar is important here!

The Greek for this is *mahn-THAN-oh*:

It means: to learn through experience, instruction, or practice. Acquiring understanding over time—not instant insight, but something gained through a process.

It's actually the root behind the English word "mathematics." And if you were more English-minded in school, like me, math class was truly a PRO-CESS.

Anyway, the idea communicated by this Greek word manthano is learning **step by step through practice and discipline.**

We can also notice this is written in the PAST tense meaning it is a COMPLETED reality. He has come to LEARN to be content through LIVED EXPERIENCE.

Contentment is not an innate, natural instinct. It has been LEARNED as a PROCESS of growth and maturity through various seasons.

Next we see this: "**Whatever situation**" - Paul had quite a few "situations." He writes in

### **2 Corinthians 6:4–5**

...as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: **by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger...**

### **2 Corinthians 11:23–28**

...greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

He has been in quite a few "situations." In these situations, there has been STRAINING, PRESSING, MUCH MUCH EFFORT.

SO, some context and recap - About five to six years after writing Second Epistle to the Corinthians (what we just heard)—where Paul lists the many sufferings he had already endured—he writes **this** Epistle to the Philippians while he is **still imprisoned**, HE IS CURRENTLY IMPRISONED, showing that he was **content not because life had become easier, but because he has learned something that allowed him “to be content.”**

And now let's look at "**Content**" here in this verse: it is the Greek word ow-TAR-key-ah - Let's break this down on the next slide. What does this word MEAN?



# “Content”

**Greek: *autarkeia***

*Auto* - self

*Arkeo* - to be **enough**, to suffice

**Latin: *contentus***

*continere* - **to hold together**, to contain, to restrain

Self-controlled – satisfied – not needing more

**“Being inwardly held together”**



So “Content” in Greek is **autarkeia** which is formed from

Auto – self

(like “automatic” means it can function by itself) like an automatic coffee maker---it can turn itSELF on in the morning

Arkeo – to be enough, to suffice

“*Arkeō* means ‘enough.’

Not excess. Not abundance.

Just—**fully sufficient for what is required.**”

In Greek philosophy during Paul’s time, *autarkeia* meant self-sufficiency—the ability to remain inwardly unaffected by circumstances because a person possessed everything necessary within themselves.

They would say, essentially:

*“I need nothing. I am enough within myself.”*

And if we’re honest, we hear that same message today—just dressed up in modern language:

*“Follow your heart.”*

*“Everything you need is already inside you.”*

*“You define your truth.”*

*“You decide who you are.”*

And even more subtly—we may not say it out loud, but **we might live like this:**  
*If I can just get everything in order—my schedule, my home, my finances, my relationships—  
then I'll be okay.*

**BUT NOTICE THIS:**

Paul uses their word—but he completely redefines it.  
He says he can remain content, “inwardly held together” in any circumstance...  
but NOT because the self is enough.

**Because Christ is enough.**

Christ supplies what the heart needs so that circumstances cannot unravel it.

Now this gets even more interesting when we look at the Latin root for our English word  
“content.”

In Latin, “content” is contentus

From *continere* —

to hold together

to contain

to restrain

Self-controlled

Satisfied

Not needing more

You could almost translate the idea as:

“Being inwardly held together.”

So Paul is saying that no matter what situation happens, he remains inwardly content.

He is held together.

He is satisfied.

He has LEARNED that CHRIST is **sufficient, Christ is ENOUGH to hold him inwardly together**  
in every circumstance, every **situation**.

A learned, practiced (going back to that root manTHANo), internal steadiness rooted in  
dependence on Christ.

But if *arkeō* means ‘enough’ —

then we need to ask:

**What happens in us when we don't believe what we have is enough?**

So let's bring this down into real life for a moment.

What **does it look like** when we're *not* convinced that Christ is enough?

not  
*...enough*

- **Self-pity** – What I have is NOT ENOUGH for me
- **Envy** – What I have is NOT ENOUGH compared to others
- **Anxiety** – What I have will NOT BE ENOUGH for what’s coming
- **Complaining** – saying “This is NOT ENOUGH... and I’m not okay with it.”



“It looks like and reveals itself in things like—  
self-pity...  
envy...  
anxiety...  
complaining...”

**Self-pity → “What I have is not enough for me.”**

**Self-pity says:**

“What I’ve been given is not enough... and it’s not fair.”

It’s not just sadness—it’s an evaluation:

My situation isn’t what I wanted

My life isn’t turning out the way I expected

What I’m dealing with feels heavier than what others have to carry

You could say:

**“Self-pity happens when we start to believe:**

**“what I’ve been given for my life... is not enough.”**

**2. Envy → “What I have is not enough compared to others.”**

**Envy says:**

“What they have is better... and what I have isn’t enough.”

So now we’re measuring our lives by someone else’s.

It’s not just a feeling—again, it’s an evaluation:

- Her life looks easier than mine
- Their family seems happier than ours
- She has opportunities I don’t have
- Things seem to work out for them, not for me

**Envy happens when we think we don’t have ENOUGH compared to what others have.**

### **3. Anxiety → “What I have will not be enough for what’s coming.”**

**Anxiety says:**

“What I have right now won’t be enough for what’s coming.”

This one is future-oriented.

- How am I going to handle this if it gets worse?
- What if I can’t keep up with everything that’s coming?
- What if we don’t have what we need later?
- What if I don’t have the strength for this tomorrow?

So even if today feels manageable, the fear is:

I don’t have ENOUGH to be able to carry what’s ahead

You could say:

**“Anxiety is what grows when we start to believe we won’t have what we need for what’s ahead.”**

### **4. Complaining → “saying “This is NOT ENOUGH...and I’m not okay with it.”**

Complaining is what happens when the internal belief spills outward.

It’s verbalized dissatisfaction.

Self-pity stays inward—it grieves, ‘This is not enough for me.’

But complaining goes further—it outwardly resists, it rebels.

‘This is not right... this shouldn’t be this way.’

And if we’re honest, underneath that is a quiet assumption—

that we know better than the One who has allowed this circumstance.” And that is treacherous water in which to tread.

“From the very beginning, this has been our struggle—believing that what God has given is not sufficient... and reaching for something more.”

Self-pity, envy, anxiety, complaining—

they all flow from the same root: a quiet but powerful belief that **ALL** of what God has given... is not sufficient.”

And YET--- **contentment** is not pretending everything is easy— it is the settled conviction that what God has provided—in this moment, in this season, in this life—that HE is enough.

Coming back to our focus text, we know that Paul has been shipwrecked, beaten, and is currently in prison—so let's look at how he summarizes his experiences in which he learned contentment next.



**I know** how to be brought low,  
and **I know** how to abound.  
In any and every circumstance,  
I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger,  
abundance and need. (v. 12)



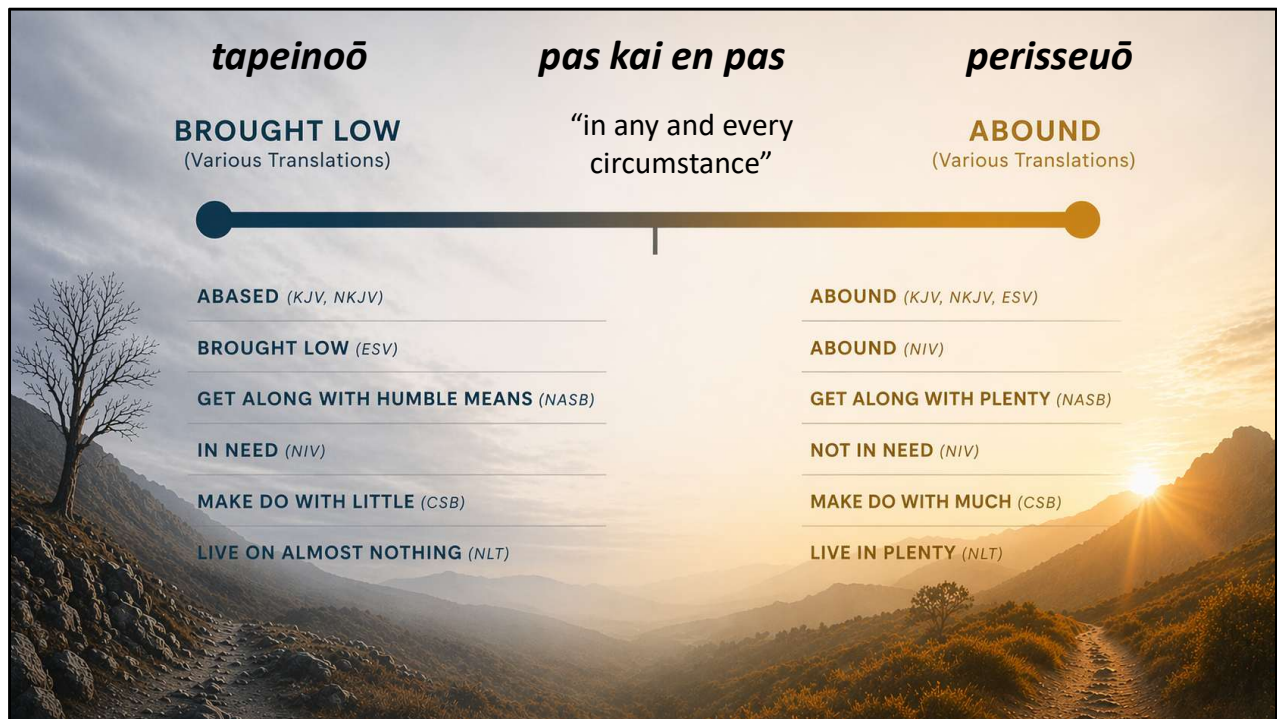
Paul writes in verse 12, “I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.”

He says I KNOW and I KNOW. If it is repeated, it is EMPHASIZED and IMPORTANT to notice.

These two words in the Greek “oida” indicate SETTLED knowledge that he POSSESSES. “to know from having seen/experienced”

He learned in whatever situation to be content  
And now HE KNOWS how to be brought low and HE KNOWS how to abound.

This is lived, settled, tested knowledge of Christ’s sufficiency.



Take a look at the various translations for “brought low” and “abound”

- When Paul says ‘I know how to be brought low’—the Greek word is *tapeinoō*—**tah PIE no-oh** -it literally means to be humbled or pressed down...”
- We see this concept translated in different versions as abased (NKJV), get along with humble means (NASB), in need, make do with little, live on almost nothing

Paul, as an apostle, a missionary for the gospel in foreign, pagan lands, absolutely KNEW poverty and humiliation. Earlier, we saw the list of circumstances he encountered - shipwrecked, beaten, “often without food.” In 2 Corinthians he says “imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death.”

His ability to “be brought low” is not from himself. It is his mindset, his PHRONEO, to depend on God.

“To abound”

- Then for “abound” we see the Greek word *perisseuō* when means “**to overflow to have more than enough to abound, exceed, or be in surplus**”
- And it is translated to abound, get along with plenty, not in need, make do with much, live in plenty

Paul wasn't always in poverty. He received financial gifts and was able to live comfortably at times. However, when those times arose, we see that he did not become complacent or

Next, Paul uses the Greek word *pas* twice — 'in every and in all.' In other words, he's covering the entire spectrum of life. There is no circumstance outside the range of what he's talking about.

Paul structures this in a way that leaves no room for our usual objections:

"Well, sure... but not in *this* situation."

"That works when things are good, but not when..."

Paul's structure says:

**"NO.** I've lived both extremes—and everything between—and the same truth holds."

Notice the other words he uses – plenty, hungry, abundance, need. These are basic HUMAN needs. Physical needs.

He has had to ADAPT, he has had to LEARN, he has had to DEPEND on GOD for BASIC survival.

The circumstances are TRAINING him, repeated PRACTICE. He was a STUDENT of his circumstances.

He has had to LEARN to be content in PROSPERITY just as much as he had to learn to be content in POVERTY.

Paul's CONTENTMENT is not based on *what is happening* in his circumstances in the darkest valley nor on the highest mountaintop.

He writes: "I have learned the secret"

The grammar in this clause is essential:

This is from the Greek word *myeo moo-EH-oh* which is perfect / passive

1. Perfect Tense

The perfect tense in Greek describes: **a completed action in the past with ongoing results in the present.**

So Paul is saying something like:

"At some point I was brought into this understanding, and the result of that still shapes my life now."

2. Passive Voice

This is the really interesting part.

Passive voice means the action is done to Paul, not by Paul.

He does not say: "I figured it out."

He says something closer to:

"I have been initiated." by someone else

"I have been brought into this" by someone else

Someone else is the one DOING THE ACTION. Paul is the passive recipient.

Paul is very careful here. He doesn't say, 'I discovered this.'

He says, 'I was brought into this.'

Which means this contentment... this steadiness...**was not self-produced.** That means someone else is responsible for this transformation.

So we have to ask—

**who is the one doing the initiating?**

And Paul doesn't leave us guessing who that is—

because in the very next verse he tells us:

'I can do all things through **Him** who strengthens me.'



# “I have learned the secret”

I know οἶδα oída G1492 εἶδω eidō V-RAI-1S	both δὲ de G1161 δέ de CONJ	how to be abased, ταπεινοῦσθαι tapeinousthai G5013 ταπεινώ tapeinoō V-PPN	I know οἶδα oída G1492 εἶδω eidō V-RAI-1S	and καί kai G2532 καί kai CONJ	how to abound: περισεύειν perisseuein G4052 περισεύω perisseuō V-PAN	ἐν en G1722 ἐν en PREP	every where παντὶ panti G3956 πᾶς pas A-DSM	and καί kai G2532 καί kai CONJ	in ἐν en G1722 ἐν en PREP
all things πάντων pantin G3956 πᾶς pas A-DPM	I am instructed μεμύημαι memyēmai G3453 μυέω myeō V-RPI-1S	both καί kai G2532 καί kai CONJ	to be full χορτάζεσθαι chortazesthai G5526 χορτάζω chortazō V-PPN	and καί kai G2532 καί kai CONJ	to be hungry, πεινᾶν peinan G3983 πεινάω peinaō V-PAN	both καί kai G2532 καί kai CONJ	to abound περισεύειν perisseuein G4052 περισεύω perisseuō V-PAN	and καί kai G2532 καί kai CONJ	to suffer need. ὑστερεῖσθαι hystereisthai G5302 ὑστερέω hystereō V-PPN





I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. (v. 13)



- In whatever situation
- Brought low
- Abounding
- In any and every circumstance
- Plenty and hunger
- Abundance and need



Paul now says: “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. (v. 13)

This is the SECRET he has learned – in whatever situation, in any and every circumstance, in ALL THINGS---is through HIM, CHRIST, who strengthens him.

- The full spectrum of human experience.
- “Through HIM who strengthens me.”
- “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

Pay attention—Paul is not saying this about winning championships, achieving personal dreams (NOT “I can conquer anything!”) - These kind of ideas serve human vanity, pride—many times this verse has been misinterpreted and misapplied.

We MUST interpret Scripture within CONTEXT of Scripture. Paul just listed in verse 12 right before what the “all things” are:

Plenty and hunger  
Abundance and need

- It is through a learned dependence on Christ as our sufficient strength for

whatever circumstances God has ordained for your life.

- It is about **sufficiency**, not achievement.

Contentment comes when the heart knows: “Whatever circumstance comes, Christ gives strength—but that strength is only found in Him.”

Not through circumstances. Not through willpower.

- Psalm 121 - Where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of Heaven and Earth”
- 2 Timothy 4:17 -The Lord stood by me and strengthened me.”
- 1 Timothy 1:12 -I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service,
- John 15:5 - I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing”
- 1 Corinthians 15:10 - But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

### **In Him.**

It is about **sufficiency**, not achievement. “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

Paul has *learned* that Christ is sufficient—enough to hold him inwardly together in every circumstance, every situation. He is DEPENDING on Christ no matter the highs and lows of life.

It’s the same truth captured in the hymn “*It Is Well with My Soul,*” written by a man who knew both deep loss and deep peace:

“When **peace** like a river attendeth my way,

When **sorrows** like sea billows roll;

**Whatever my lot, Thou** hast taught me to say,

‘It is well, it is well with my soul.’”

**Because of Christ.**

**\*\*But...he can't depend on someone he doesn't *know*.\*\***



## We can't depend on someone we don't KNOW. What does it mean to KNOW Him?

- **Phil. 3:8** - Everything that once gave Paul identity or security is now loss: His Jewish heritage, his religious achievement as a Pharisee, his personal righteousness, his reputation. Christ replaces all of it.
  - Knowing Christ is not one goal among many—it *replaces* all others.
- **Phil 3:9** – Christ's righteousness replaces our own
  - Place your full faith in Jesus Christ—who He is and what He has done.
  - And when you do, you are forgiven, made new, and declared righteous because you are now in Him. You BELONG to Him.
- **Phil 3:10** – Share in his sufferings—participate in His life, be transformed by Him, be conformed to Him
  - Ultimately leading to eternal life with Him (Phil. 3:11)



*Likewise, WE can't depend on someone WE don't KNOW.*

Paul is internally “held together” because he KNOWS Christ.

### **Well, what does it mean to KNOW Him?**

Paul tells us in Philippians Chapter 3:8-10

8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— 10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death

1. **Philippians 3:8 (ESV)** “Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.”
  - a. Here Paul is talking about the value of Christ Himself.
  - b. Everything that once gave Paul identity or security is now loss: His Jewish

heritage, his religious achievement as a Pharisee, his personal righteousness, his reputation. **Christ replaces all of it.**

- c. Knowing Christ is not one goal among many—it *replaces* all others.

**Then in verse 9, Christ's righteousness replaces our own:**

*"...and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own... but that which comes through faith in Christ..."*

Here Paul answers the most important question: **How can a sinner actually belong to a holy God?**

Because that's the problem—not just Paul's problem... ours.

The Bible says:

**Romans 3:23** — *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

**Romans 6:23** — *The wages of sin is death.*

We do not have a righteousness of our own that can stand before God.

But Paul says—

there is **another righteousness available.**

Not earned.

Not achieved.

**Given.**

**Romans 5:8** — *While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

On the cross, Jesus took our sin upon Himself—and in exchange, He gives us His righteousness.

That's what it means to be **"found in Him."**

And how do we receive that?

**Ephesians 2:8–9** — *By grace... through faith... not a result of works.*

So the response is not to try harder—it is to **stop trusting in yourself** and place your full faith in Jesus Christ—

who He is and what He has done.

And when you do—

you are forgiven, made new, and declared righteous...**because you are now in Him. You BELONG to Him.**

**And once that is true—once you are in Him—  
then the goal is no longer to earn righteousness...**

It is what Paul says in verse 10:

*"that I may know Him..."*

Now knowing Christ is not about *becoming* accepted—it **flows from already being accepted.**

Continuing in verse 10, "that **I may know him** and the power of his resurrection, and **may share his sufferings**"

- a. Here, knowing Christ means: fellowship with Him, participation in His life, sharing His sufferings, being conformed to Him

1. Paul then looks forward to the final outcome. Philippians 3:11 (ESV) "that by any

means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” Knowing Christ ultimately leads to **eternal life with Him**.

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

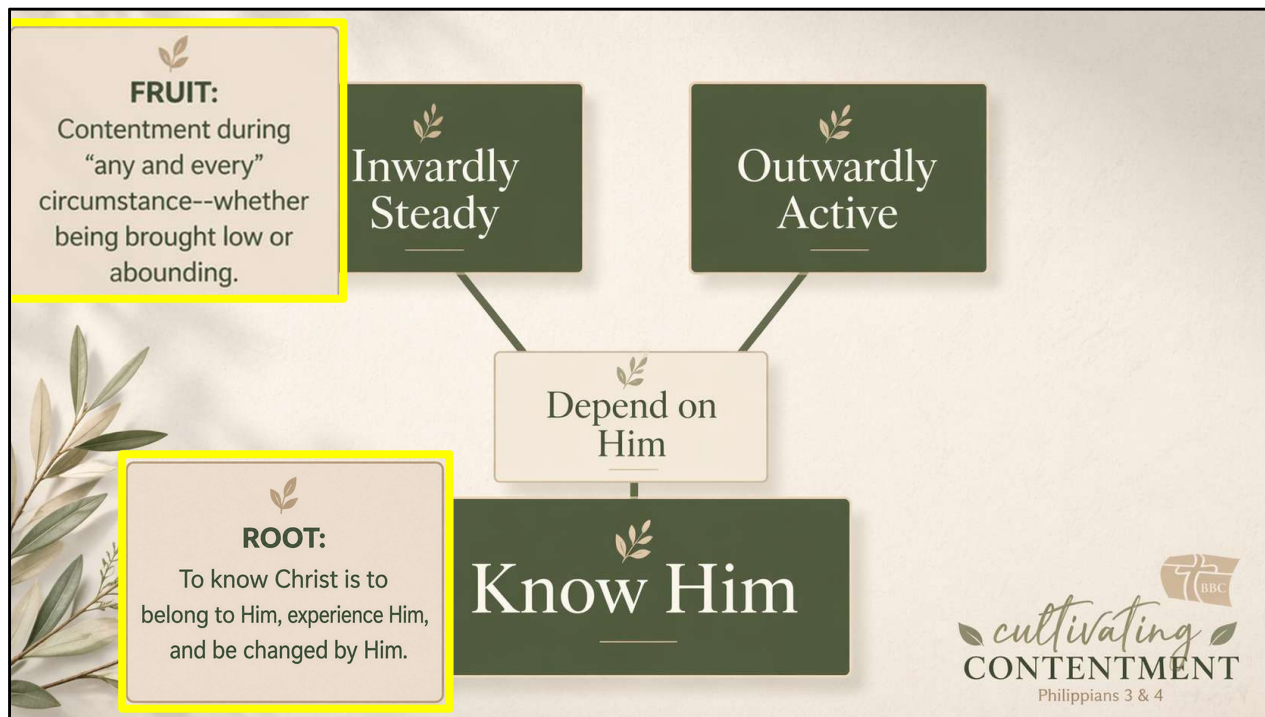
“beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image...”

2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

Thus, coming back to our focus text, Philippians Chapter 3 tells us the HOW to get to know him. Chapter 4, then, shows the FRUIT of KNOWING HIM

Paul’s *contentment* is not separate from knowing Christ—it is **evidence** of it.



Knowing Christ is not static—it changes you.

If there is no transformation, Paul would question whether there is *real* “knowing.”

Knowing Christ is not merely knowing *about* Him—it is recognizing my sin, trusting in Christ’s finished work on the cross for my salvation, and by grace through faith being found in Him; united to Him, depending on Him, experiencing Him in both suffering and strength, and being continually transformed by Him.

*This is the ROOT: To know Christ is to belong to Him, depend on Him, experience Him, and be changed by Him.*

**Knowing Christ leads us to depending on Him and His strength, no matter the circumstance.**

**The FRUIT then, is CONTENTMENT during those circumstances--whether being brought low or abounding.**



So let's ask honestly—  
Is there evidence of contentment in your life?

Because the FRUIT is only going to be there if the ROOT is.  
Check the FRUIT and trace it back to the ROOT.

**Consider when your circumstances are hard...when you are being "BROUGHT LOW" what about when—the test results come back abnormal...do you rest in His control... or spiral in fear?**

**he comes home and asks for a divorce...do you move toward God... or begin to pull away? a sudden loss changes everything...is there a steadiness in you... or do you feel yourself unravel?**

**The paycheck isn't enough yet AGAIN and you don't know how to make it this month...do you trust His goodness... or quietly begin to question it?**

**you feel trapped in something... with no clear way out...is there peace in Him... or constant striving for escape?**

**"When you're not included... or feel invisible... do you trust who God says you are... or let others define your worth?"**

**"These are not small things. These are not easy things.**

**And in every one of them—the question is not whether it's hard.**

**The question is: where are you turning in the middle of it?"**

**And what about when you are “ABOUNDING?”**

**When your husband gets promoted...**do you still pursue Christ... or begin to coast knowing life is going to be easier?

**you find out a new baby is on the way...**do you cling to Him with gratitude... or subtly shift your security to the gift?

**your season is calm, and life feels steady...**do you press into Him... or slowly drift when everything feels easy?

**a new friendship or relationship is blossoming...**do you see it as a means to glorify Christ... or begin to center your life around it?

“God didn’t warn His people most strongly about the wilderness—He warned them about the Promised Land.”

“Not rebellion...**forgetfulness.**”

“Take care lest you forget the Lord your God...

lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them...

then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God...” **Deuteronomy 8:11–14 (ESV)**

If contentment---remaining inwardly held together--- is consistently absent as you think of these scenarios, the issue is not your circumstances...

It may be...

how deeply you **know Him in them.**

“So the question is not—

‘Am I perfectly content?’”

“The question is—

**‘What is my life revealing about what I depend on?’**

Inward contentment is fruit that SHOWS UP because we are ROOTED in CHRIST and DEPENDING on Him.

When we have this steadiness in our Lord, we are freed from being tossed around by our circumstances.

And when we are freed from that, we are freed to pour into the lives of others to show them where our HOPE lies.

And we see it as we move to verse 17.



## Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. (v. 14)

1. Returns to the gift he received from the Philippians
2. “Kind” - *kalōs*
3. “Share my trouble”
  - a. Share – *sygkoinōneō*
  - b. Partaker, sharer, partner



He next writes, “Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.”

Here Paul shifts back to talking about the gift he received from the Philippians—in context with the chunk before, he is saying “I am content through Christ—but what you did was still truly good.”

Paul says what they did was “Kind” - in Greek it is *kah-LOHS*- according to Blue Letter Bible, which is “beautiful, fine, excellent, honorable”

He also points out that this gift indicates they are “sharing” in his trouble. “Share” - (sooonhg-koy-NO-neh-o)) - which is defined:

to become a partaker together with others

To become a sharer

To be made a partner

The Philippians are PARTNERING (partakers) with a PRISONER, especially someone imprisoned for preaching Christ, which is a RISK for them, but Paul calls it *kalos* “kind” – beautiful, noble, worthy

But do NOTE:

They didn't *rescue* Paul with their gift—he is making it clear they **participated in the gospel work**.

The Philippians didn't just “donate” They **shared in Paul's affliction** They became co-

**laborers in the gospel**

Ok, let's continue to the next set of verses:



And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. (v. 15)

Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. (v. 16)

Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. (v. 17)

- “Except you only”
  - 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 - (churches of Macedonia, including Philippi) extraordinarily generous
- Accounting terminology - giving/receiving/credit
- “Fruit that increases to your credit”



“And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. (v. 15)

Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. (v. 16)

Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.” (v. 17)

- The Philippians are UNIQUE/SPECIAL - Paul writes “except you only”
  - The Philippians were not just another congregation to Paul. They were **the very first church he planted in Europe**
  - The church in Philippi began during Paul’s second missionary journey in Acts of the Apostles 16.
  - Right after, in Acts 17, he goes to Thessalonica. And here we see in verse 16, the Philippians, who have BARELY begun as a church, immediately start sending him financial help!
  - Notice also it says “ONCE AND AGAIN.” They gave to him MULTIPLE times. In the first chapter of Philippians verses 3-5, Paul says, “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” He says in verse 7 they are “fellow partakers” (LSB) with him.

Paul says in verse 17, 'Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.' Notice that conjunction "NOT" – it yet again CLARIFIES that he is not depending on their gift or desiring the money. He is SEEKING THE FRUIT THAT INCREASES TO THEIR CREDIT. What does he mean by **'fruit' here?**

He's talking about visible evidence of a transformed life—righteous action that flows from truly knowing Christ.

Earlier in this letter, he calls it 'the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ' Ch. 1:11—so this is not self-produced. This is God-produced which means—their gift to Paul is not just generosity. It's evidence.

It shows their hearts are aligned with Christ. In John 15:5 Jesus says "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much **fruit**, for apart from me you can do nothing."

And then he says something remarkable—"that increases to your credit.'

That's accounting language.

He's saying: what you are doing is being recorded... not in an earthly account, but in a heavenly one.

Exactly what Jesus teaches in Matthew 6:19-21—store up treasure in heaven. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

So Paul is saying—

I'm not most excited about the money...

I'm excited about what this reveals about you... and what it is producing for you eternally.

Because **fruit is the evidence of a transformed life**—and God sees it, and He counts it.

Paul wasn't after money; he was after maturity. Their gift met his need, but their generosity revealed growing spiritual fruit and secured eternal reward.

When you give to God's work, you're not losing anything—you're investing in something that lasts forever.

Ok, moving on:



I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. (v. 18)

- Romans 12:1-2 - A sacrifice acceptable to God
- 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 - They gave even out of their poverty



So, their “GIVING” is an act of WORSHIP to God, and God is PLEASED.

They gave even when they were in POVERTY. They gave “BEYOND THEIR MEANS.” This is totally unlike how most people respond—we hold on TIGHTER when we are struggling financially.

This reminds us of Romans 12:1-2: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

EXPLAIN??

– in 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 “We want you to know, brothers,[a] about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, 4 begging us earnestly for the favor[b] of taking part in the relief of the saints— 5 and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.”

1. Paul also lets them know HE IS OKAY. He is “taken care of.” “I am well supplied”

Next, he continues...



And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (v. 19)  
To our God and Father be glory forever and ever.  
Amen. (v. 20)

- Mark 9:41
- Luke 6:38
- “Every need”
  - Luke 10:42 - Christ is the one necessary thing!
  - Luke 12
- “To our God and Father be glory”



“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.  
(v. 19)  
To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (v. 20)

Paul moves from saying HE is “well supplied” and taken care of into the fact that GOD will supply every need of THEIRS. You gave, God will supply your needs. And God gives GRACIOUSLY and there is no end to the store He can give in “his riches in glory in Christ Jesus!”

This reminds us of Mark 9:41 when Jesus says, - “For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.” (NKJV)

Jesus says in Luke 6:38, “give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you”

But what are the needs?

Luke 10:42 - In Gospel of Luke 10:38–42, while Martha was distracted and anxious over many responsibilities, Mary chose to sit at the feet of Jesus Christ and listen to Him. Jesus explains that Mary has chosen “the one necessary thing,” reminding us that only one thing

is needful.

Luke 12 - In Luke 12, Jesus says: Do not worry about food and clothing. Your Father knows your needs. Seek the kingdom first. "Your father knows you need them. Instead, seek His kingdom and these things will be added to you"

Paul ties this "every need" to God's "riches in glory in Christ Jesus"---the KINGDOM.

Finally, In verse 20, we see Paul's praise and recognition that everything is done for GOD'S GLORY.

Alright, let's do a quick recap of what we've seen in this selection so far.

## OBSERVATION to MEANING

### What does this show us about GOD?

- He values **UNITY** and he **CARES** for His people- “you have done well to share in my trouble”
- He values **sacrificial giving** - WHAT THEIR MONEY represents is actually an eternal investment
- He values their **heart posture** “fragrant/acceptable/pleasing” - not how much is given, but HOW it is given, as worship
- God ultimately wants people to depend **on HIM** - not themselves, not others—HIM.

### What does this show us about HUMANITY?

- There is a **responsibility** of believers to partner in the work of the gospel—and specifically here, financially. Believers are expected to ACT.
- Their motivation is not out of obligation, but **GENUINE CARE** and **ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE**.
- They are faithful, again and again. **Repeated giving** even when others did not. It COST them.

Moving from OBSERVATION to meaning, let’s recap what we SEE:

This “giving” is not just support—it’s worship. It’s partnership. It’s FRUIT that increases to our eternal account.

Giving is a sacrifice to God as something He delights in.

Why can we live in a sacrificially, giving way? Because because God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (v.19)

When I move from observation to interpretation (or meaning, in COMA), I ask three questions:

1. What does this show us about GOD?
  - a. He values UNITY and he CARES for His people- “you have done well to share in my trouble”
  - b. He values sacrificial giving - WHAT THEIR MONEY represents is actually an eternal investment
  - c. He values their heart posture “fragrant/acceptable/pleasing” - not how much is given, but HOW it is given, as worship
  - d. God ultimately wants people to depend on HIM - not themselves, not

others—HIM.

2. What does this show us about HUMANITY?
  - a. There is a responsibility of believers to partner in the work of the gospel— and specifically here, financially. Believers are expected to ACT.
  - b. Their motivation is not out of obligation, but GENUINE CARE and ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE.
  - c. They are faithful, again and again. Repeated giving even when others did not. It COST them.



# Is there evidence—real fruit—in your life of PARTNERING in work of the gospel?

- Matthew 28:19-20
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
- Romans 10:14-15
- 1 Corinthians 9:16



From these observations, we can do a quick application moment here:

Do you have FRUIT of partnering in the work of the Gospel?

Is there evidence—real fruit—in your life of investment in the gospel?

How are you PARTNERING in the work of the GOSPEL?

**If someone looked at your life---where you are giving, serving, stepping in---where would they see you supporting the work of the gospel so others can hear about Jesus?**

**If someone looked at your life, what fruit would they see that shows you value the gospel?**

We don't produce fruit to become transformed—  
fruit is what *shows* we have been transformed.

Sisters in Christ, this isn't just for missionaries or pastors. Jesus commands us---**believers**--- to go and make disciples. Matthew 28:19–20

God says we are His ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5)—as if He is making His appeal through us.

And Scripture is very clear: people cannot believe if they never hear (Romans 10:14-15).

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:16 “For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”

So this is not optional for the believer. The question is not *if* we are involved—the question is *how*.

Remember in verse 10, the Philippians finally had an opportunity and they SEIZED upon it.



## Check for FRUIT

- **At Home**: Is there fruit of the gospel in your home?
  - Do your priorities, your conversations, your reactions show that Christ MATTERS MOST there?
- **Around You**: In this church, is there evidence that you are invested in what God is doing here, in this body of believers?
  - Not just “attending,” but participating, serving, giving, engaging?
- **Beyond You**: How are you helping the gospel go further?
  - Is there fruit that shows you are helping the gospel go where you cannot?
  - Who are you supporting, praying for, or sending?
  - And for some of you... is God asking you to go?

So I ask again,

How are you TAKING PART in the work of the GOSPEL?

How are you taking part in what God is doing to reach others?

**At Home**: Who are you pointing to Christ DAILY?

Is there fruit of the gospel in your home?

Do your priorities, your conversations, your sacrifices show that Christ matters most there?

**Around You**: Who is hearing about Jesus because of you?

“In this church, is there evidence that you are invested in what God is doing here?

Not just attending—but participating, serving, giving, engaging?”

**Beyond You**: How are you helping the gospel go further?

Is there fruit that shows you care about the gospel going beyond your immediate life?

Do you support it? Pray for it? Give toward it?

Or has your world stayed very small?

Because if there is no fruit...

we shouldn't just feel guilty—we should get honest.”

“What does that reveal about what we truly value?

This isn't about forcing yourself to produce something.

It's about going back to the root—  
knowing Christ so deeply that your life begins to reflect Him.

Fruit doesn't lie.  
It reveals what we truly love...  
and what we truly believe.

We are CITIZENS of a HEAVENLY KINGDOM—you may not know everyone by name here, but we are called by our Lord to serve one another—PARTNER with them. Do KINGDOM work.

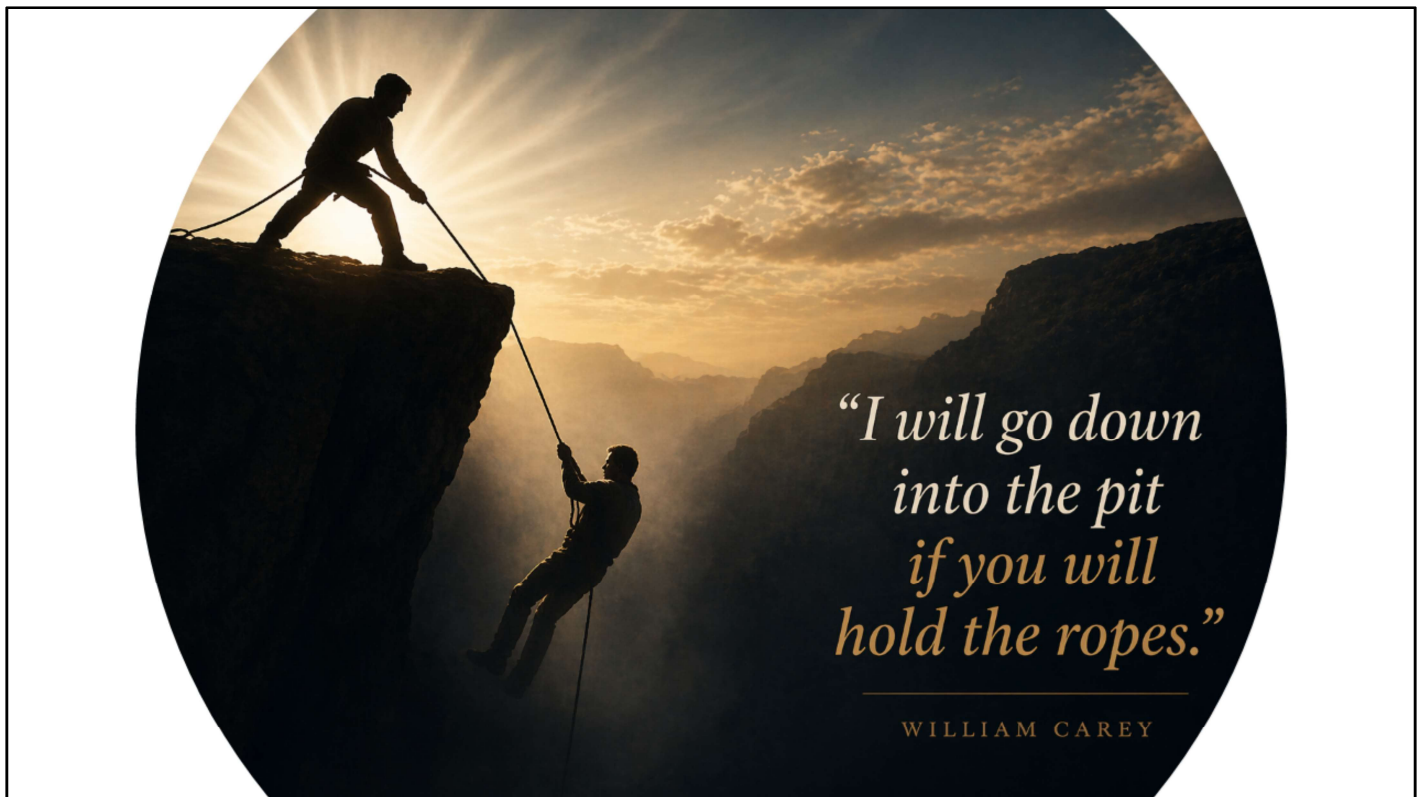
“Some of you feel too busy to engage...”  
“Some of you feel too tired...”  
“Some of you feel disqualified by your past...”  
“Some of you feel like your season has passed...”

“But the call to know Christ—and the fruit that flows from that—has never been limited by season, age, or circumstance.”

We're not asking, 'How much are you doing?'  
We're asking, '**What is growing because you know Him?**'”

This FRUIT that increases to our HEAVENLY credit – it will transform us and it GLORIFIES HIM.  
This is an act of WORSHIP  
This is COMMUNITY and UNITY

Are you **SEIZING** the opportunities that are presented before you to support materially, spiritually?



There's a well-known missions story about William Carey, often called the "father of modern missions." His portrait is actually on the wall in our church admin hallway across from Amy Carmichael and Charles Spurgeon.

Before he left for India, he told a group of supporters something very simple:

*"I will go down into the pit, if you will hold the rope."*

And that's exactly what happened.

Carey went—into hardship, isolation, spiritual darkness.  
But he didn't go alone.

Back home, others:

- gave financially
- prayed constantly
- wrote letters
- endured their own sacrifices to keep him there

They weren't in India—but they were absolutely part of the work. Because of that support, Carey translated the Bible into multiple Indian languages, helped establish schools, and trained local leaders for gospel ministry.

William Carey went to India in 1793—over 200 years ago. Today, there are over 60 million Christians in India—and in many places, the gospel is still spreading through local believers.

That's the kind of **fruit** that began when people chose to partner in the work of the gospel.

Everyone, let's take a moment to consider...**where is God calling you to go down into the pit (to share the gospel)... and where is He calling you to hold the rope (to support those sharing the gospel)?"**

And let's be clear—

*holding the ropes is not just meeting needs... it's moving the gospel forward.*

So let's ask a little deeper:

Who in my life does not know Christ—and I've stayed silent?

Who has God already placed in my path that I've treated like background noise instead of a soul?

Where am I choosing comfort over courage when it comes to speaking about Jesus?

When was the last time I actually shared the gospel—not just lived a "nice life," but spoke the name of Christ?

Who could I invite into a real conversation about what I believe—and why?

Am I praying specifically for anyone's salvation—or just generally for "people"?

Do I even expect God to use me... or have I quietly decided that's for someone else?

Am I called to go somewhere—or have I already said "no" without asking?

Am I actively supporting those who *are* going—through prayer, giving, encouragement—or am I disconnected from the work entirely?

**Not someday.**

**Not theoretically.**

**Right now.**

Who is one name God is putting on your heart?

What is one step of obedience you already know you've been avoiding?

**The Philippians didn't wait for perfect conditions—they recognized the opportunity, and they seized it.**

**So the question is not: "Should I be involved? The question is: "Where am I being called to**

**step in—and will I obey?”**

**Who needs to sit and talk?** *Who could use a friend to listen, pray—and gently point them to Christ?*

**Who needs a meal dropped off?** *...and a reminder of the One who provides more than daily bread?*

**Who needs childcare, a ride, help getting groceries?** *...and through that, an open door to speak about the hope you have?*

**Who is lonely that I could invite into my home?** *...not just for company, but so they encounter Christ through you?*

**Who has God placed in my path...?** *...not just to notice—but to move toward with both compassion and truth?*

The Philippians didn't wait until it was easy or socially beneficial—they SEIZED the opportunity to “hold the ropes” for Paul.

**Who can you be a Philippian to?**



Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.  
All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.  
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. (v. 21, 22, 23)

- Community
- Grace



"Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.  
All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.  
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." (v. 21, 22, 23)

It is so easy to "skip" over these ending "greetings," isn't it? But look at what is SHOWN here—camaraderie, a sense of COMMUNITY, a sense of being CARED FOR and THOUGHT ABOUT—you are NOT ALONE.

We also see that the GOSPEL is EFFECTIVE (Caesar's household).

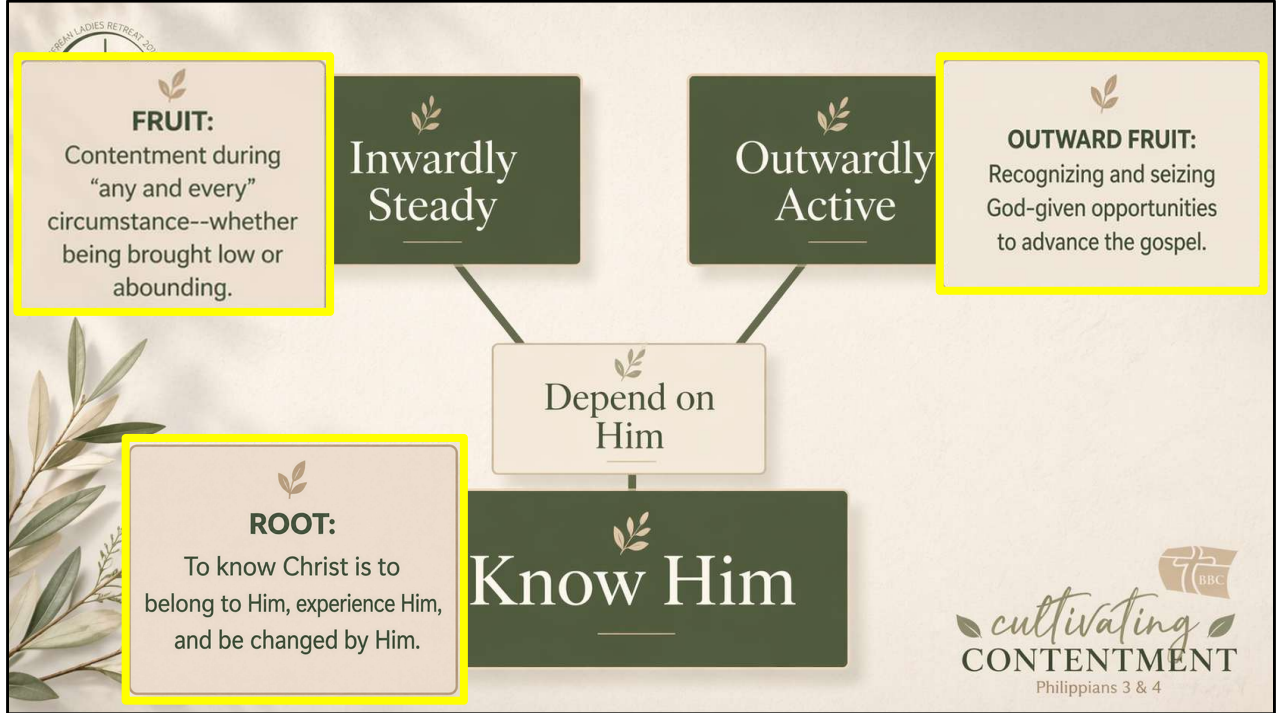
In chapter 1 of Philippians, Paul says in verse 12, "Now I want you to know brothers, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel" (LSB). There are believers BELIEVING because of Paul's location—in prison, with many Romans of "Caesar's household."

Paul ends with one final blessing—we also are lulled into ignoring it because we see it so often, but these are POWERFUL words:

"The GRACE of the LORD Jesus Christ BE WITH YOUR SPIRIT."

Not only do you have other believers, but you have the GRACE of the LORD JESUS CHRIST with your SPIRIT—you, internally!

Let's review what we've learned from this amazing set of verses.



Ok let's look at our big picture again.

At the base, the absolute FOUNDATION, we MUST KNOW HIM. This is the ROOT SYSTEM.

As we KNOW HIM more deeply from what He has revealed about Himself in Scripture, we recognize we MUST DEPEND ON HIM. For our very lives. For our eternal security AND for our daily sustenance,

When we DEPEND on Him, there is EVIDENCE.

FRUIT. Inwardly that we personally see and know—contentment during “any and every” circumstance—whether being brought low or abounding, and

OUTWARDLY—recognizing and SEIZING God-given opportunities to advance the gospel.

We tend to live as though the Christian life is JUST about producing fruit on the outside... but Scripture keeps bringing us back to something deeper.

Think about it this way:

Does a gardener just pour water on the tomato itself?

Does the gardener slap fertilizer on the outside of the bell pepper to make it grow?

NO!

The gardener focuses on the SOIL and CULTIVATES the SOIL.

The “fruit” comes because the SOIL is right!

And what is that ‘soil’ in the Christian life? It is a heart and mind that is saturated with the knowledge of Christ.

So in the same way, God is not calling us to focus on producing fruit—He is calling us to cultivate a life where Christ is known. the Christian life is not primarily about trying harder to produce “fruit.”

Did Paul STRIVE to produce the fruit of “contentment” in all his circumstances? NO! He is pressing “on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (3:14). Paul counts everything as “LOSS for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord”--- “that I may know HIM” (3:10)

And this “pressing on” doesn’t come easily or naturally. It requires INTENTION and CARE.

A gardener really has to WORK THE SOIL—and it isn’t a one-stop shop where you do it once and its done. There is a daily NURTURING, a daily WATERING, a daily FERTILIZING to keep that plant alive and to keep it growing. We’ve got to pull out the WEEDS that so easily strangle, we’ve got to TILL the hard-packed dirt to make it soft and WILLING to receive.

You know, I've tried this before in my own vegetable garden—go out, water everything really well... and then not come back for a week. And somehow, my plants did not appreciate that system. Apparently, they need more than my once-a-week enthusiasm.

The word 'cultivate' actually means more than just working the soil—it carries the idea of tending, caring for, even **honoring** what is growing.

BUT, please do notice: A gardener works the soil—but he cannot produce the life. Only God does that. And Paul actually says this—"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." (1 Cor. 3:6).

We cultivate—but only God produces the life.

In John 15:8, Jesus Himself says, "By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."

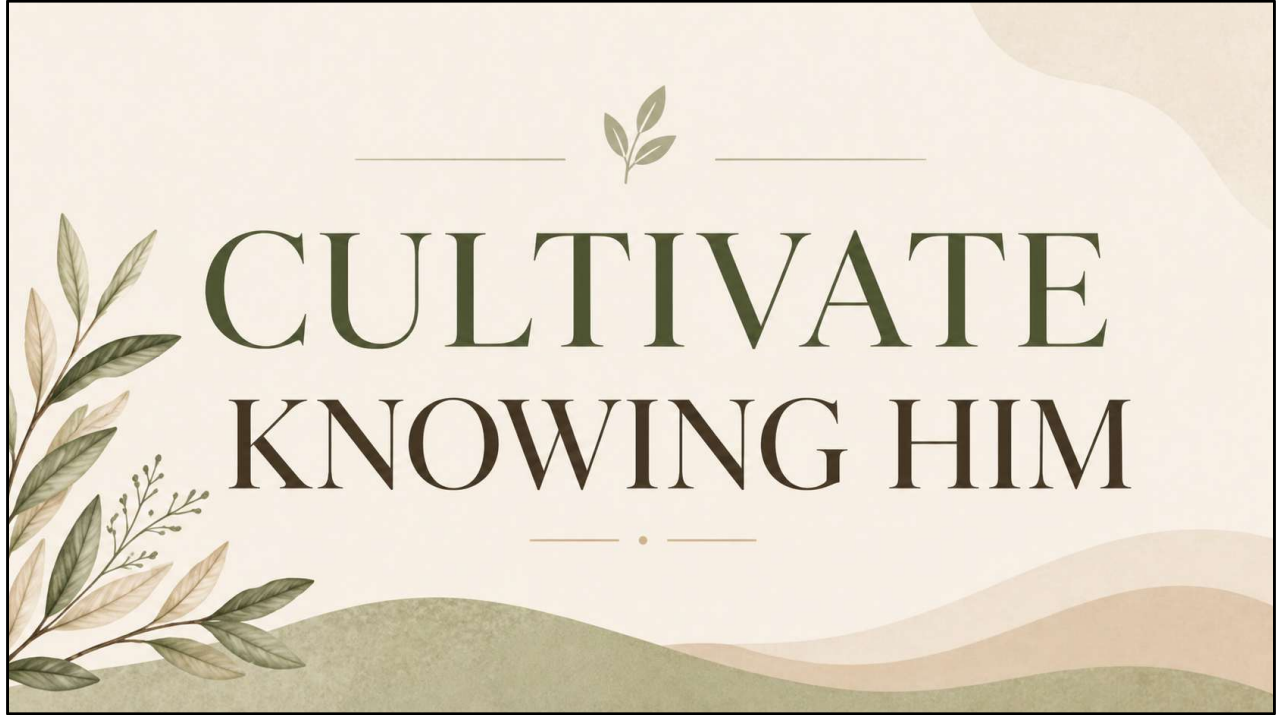
The fruit isn't the goal—the glory of God is. And **fruit is the evidence that we are truly KNOW Him and are DEPENDING on Him.**

And WHAT A MERCY it is that God ALLOWS US, in our weakness, our frailty, our sinfulness, to KNOW HIM—A HOLY GOD. That He has SPOKEN to YOUR HEART through his Holy Spirit.

A plant cannot grow in darkness.

Move out of the darkness and into MARVELOUS LIGHT, ladies. JESUS is the LIGHT.

I'm going to flip our retreat theme a little from "Cultivating Contentment" to "Cultivating KNOWING HIM."





## How do you explain how you KNOW someone?

- When you first MET
- Memories of what you've done or gone through together
- What makes that person HAPPY or ANGRY
- What that person LIKES or DOESN'T like
- What makes them KNOW they are SPECIAL to you and SEEN

This is EXPERIENTIAL knowledge.

**Can you answer these questions *about JESUS?***



I grew up in the church.

I feel like I take this phrase for granted or that I didn't really have a grasp or handle on what it really means. "Do you KNOW the Lord?" Do you KNOW Jesus? I heard it so often that it kind of had a lullaby-effect on me (you hear something so often you don't even listen to it).

Sometimes the greatest danger isn't that we've never heard the truth...  
it's that we've heard it so often it no longer moves us.

It becomes like a lullaby—we're around it, but we're no longer awake to it.

Or if we've not heard something before, it seems so far out of reach and part of a vocabulary or world where WE don't fit in. It's like you hear someone talking from a room across the house—it echoes, but it doesn't seem to TOUCH you.

"KNOW CHRIST."

What does that actually mean? What does that LOOK like, FEEL like, on this side of heaven where we are bound by temporal battles and attacked by our flesh and temptation and we have not yet SEEN the face of our Savior? When you are thread bare, or "thin, sort of stretched, like butter scraped over too much bread."

When the struggles and the loneliness and the heartache hollow you out, or the monotonous ease of life, the numb complacency and nauseating luxuriating comfort callouses your ability to feel the truth.

Maybe you sung the song with lip service without truly GRASPING it ---"I want to know you, Jesus my Lord"

What is KNOWING Him? What is KNOWING anyone?

How would you explain how you KNOW a person, here in this room, for example? Or a lifelong friend?

You would probably start with when you FIRST MET THEM and your life was changed by their presence.

You would probably retell a memory of something you've DONE TOGETHER---something positive, something fun. Or perhaps when they walked with you through a tragedy and supported you all the way.

You could probably talk about what that person LIKES or DOESN'T like, What makes them happy, what gets under their skin. What EXCITES them, what makes them feel SPECIAL and SEEN.

It's experiential—you've EXPERIENCED life together. You've LEARNED about each other as you've traversed the highest mountains and the deepest valleys of human life.

You do things to make that person feel LOVED---consciously spending time together, making efforts to give to them, learning from them, remembering with them.

You keep a relationship ALIVE by committing time to it, each day, listening to that person, talking to that person, RELYING on that person, and that person RELYING on you. Knowing what that person likes, avoiding what that person dislikes. Taking time making that person feel SEEN and SPECIAL.

CLICK


Is this what we are doing with JESUS?

When did you first MEET Him?

What is something you've DONE with Him?

What does He LIKE, what DOESN'T He like? What makes Him happy? Unhappy?

What makes Him feel SEEN in your life?



# CULTIVATE KNOWING HIM


**God WANTS us to KNOW Him.**

**PRAY** – Talk to Him, Remember what He has done

**BE IN HIS WORD** – Hear from Him

**CLEAR OUT YOUR TEMPLE** – Know what pleases God and get rid of anything that doesn't

**TAKE PART IN THE GOSPEL** – He is glorified and honored



So HOW DO WE CULTIVATE “KNOWING HIM?”

God WANTS us to know Him.

- Jeremiah 9:23-24 “Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he **understands and knows** me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.””
- John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that **they know you** the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”
- Hosea 6:6 “For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, **the knowledge of God** rather than burnt offerings.”

First—PRAY. You have GOT to talk to someone to get to know them. In Philippians Chapter 4 verse, 6, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with

thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Ask Him to help you KNOW Him—REQUEST it! Charles Spurgeon wrote, “A prayerless soul is a Christless soul.”

Next, BE IN THE WORD. Read a Gospel cover to cover –KNOW JESUS-- start TODAY when you get home. Pick one TODAY during your reflection time. Fill your mind with the word of God. As Kelly’s section said 4:8, “whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” The word of God will fill your mind with what is TRUE, HONORABLE, JUST, PURE, LOVELY, COMMENDABLE, EXCELLENT, and WORTHY OF PRAISE—> HIMSELF!

Next, clear out your TEMPLE. (Romans 12:1-2 we read aloud earlier), but let’s look at Deuteronomy 13:6-10 - “KILL anyone [anything] who entices you to follow after other gods.” - Get rid of whatever is stealing you away from being IN CHRIST. You can’t be IN HIM if you have JUNK IN YOU. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NKJV) “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If anyone [a]defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NKJV) “19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body [a]and in your spirit, which are God’s.” “Abstain from every form of evil.” (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Finally, TAKE PART IN THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL. Be involved in the body of believers—how are you spending your time? Your finances? Your effort? Live it out!

Remember, Paul says “I HAVE LEARNED” - this isn’t a one-time-and-done thing. You must tend a garden DAILY to make the good fruit GROW. Tend the garden of your heart DAILY. “Practice these things” Paul says.

1. PRAY - Mark 11:24 - “Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.” (NKJV)
2. PRAY that you will be IN CHRIST. This aligns with God’s will for His people and He is

FAITHFUL to answer!



# CULTIVATE KNOWING HIM

Jesus to know You  Through SALVATION

**then know You more**  Through a GROWING  
RELATIONSHIP that TRANSFORMS  
you from the INSIDE OUT

*“For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed  
to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn  
among many brothers.”*

Romans 8:29.



I'm not saying you need to pray more or read your Bible more just generally—I'm asking you to CULTIVATE the SOIL. Not a checkbox. Not a to-do list. Not a guilt trip. PLEASE, ladies. Cultivate KNOWING Him. If you BELIEVE it, you will DO it. "Even a child is known by his actions" Proverbs 20:11 —are your daily CHOICES—what you CHOOSE do think on, spend time on, be shaped by—moving you toward KNOWING Him?