

# Living the Good News of Jesus

Thomas Robinson, *Life and More Life 2*, May 5, 2019

Philippians 1:15 – 2:4 (Trans TR based on ESV)

<sup>15</sup> Now some people are **announcing** about the **Anointed King** (*Christos*) because of **envy** and **rivalry** and others because of **good will**. <sup>16</sup> The latter out of **love** (*agapé*), since they know that I am where I am for the **defense of that Royal proclamation** (Good News). <sup>17</sup> The former are **publicly talking about the Anointed King** out of individual ambition, not sincerely, but intending to **stir up worse trouble** for me in my **fetters**.

<sup>18</sup> What then? Only that in every way, whether with false motives or in truth, an **Anointed King is being publicly discussed**, and in this I **rejoice**.

Yes, I'll continue rejoicing, <sup>19</sup> for I know that for me this will lead into **salvation** through your **entreaty** and what is provided by **the Spirit of Jesus Anointed King**. <sup>20</sup> In all this it's my eager expectation and hope that I will **in no way be shamed**, but rather with all **boldness**, now as always, **the King** (*Christos*) will be **shown in his greatness in my body, whether through life or through death**.

<sup>21</sup> For to me **to live is Christ**, and to **die is a gain**. <sup>22</sup> If it's going to be **living in the flesh**, for me that means a **fruitful harvest** requiring labor, and I am not predicting which I'll pick. <sup>23</sup> I am caught between the two, since I have the **desire** for release and to **be with the King** (*Christos*) – better by far! <sup>24</sup> But **remaining in the flesh** is more **necessary on your account**. <sup>25</sup> Since I'm convinced of the latter, I'm sure that I'll **remain** and **continue** with all of you, to help **you make progress** and **have joy** in your **faith** <sup>26</sup> so that your celebration may abound in **Anointed King Jesus** and may include me as I come to stay with you again.

<sup>27</sup> Especially, **live as community citizens** in a way **worthy of the Royal proclamation** (Good News) of the **Anointed King**, so that whether I come and see you or am away, I may hear of you that you are **standing firm by one Spirit**, with **one soul** (*psyché*) **striving in support of each other for the faith that belongs to the Good Proclamation**. <sup>28</sup> And don't be intimidated in anything by **those who oppose you**, since for them this is a clear sign of loss, but of deliverance for you, and **all this from God**.

<sup>29</sup> For by grace you've been granted **to do something on behalf of the King** (*Christos*) – that you not only **have faith in him** but also **suffer on his behalf**, <sup>30</sup> engaged in **the same kind of struggle** that you observed that I had in the past and that you now hear is happening with me.

<sup>2:1</sup> Therefore, if there is any **encouragement in our Anointed King** (*Christos*), if any support that flows from **love** (*agapé*), if any **sharing of Spirit**, if any **deep feelings** and **expressions of empathy**, <sup>2</sup> **fill up my joy**, which is that **you think** (*phronein*) **with a single focus**, having **the same love, together in soul and thinking the one thing** – <sup>3</sup> not drawing your thinking from individual ambition or empty glory, but with **humility of thought** considering **each other** more important than yourselves, <sup>4</sup> with each one watching out not for personal interests, but **each of the group for the interests of others**.

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Philippians 1:9-10

<sup>9</sup> This is my prayer, that the love you share may abound more and more in a discerning knowledge and in all perception <sup>10</sup> in order that by testing you may determine the things that really matter ....

## How Jesus' Story becomes My Story

Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection are the climax of the whole event of Jesus among us.

Jesus' followers realized that this great event changed their perception of everything and everyone, including God and themselves and all creation. The NT is the record of their explorations of what it means to live in a world with Jesus' cross and resurrection.

Paul brought Jesus' whole story to Philippi. Jews, Pagans, women, slaves, Roman veterans, were drawn into a community. There was violent reaction, beating, prison, release.

Paul left for other cities. Now he's in prison in Ephesus. Philippi sent help, but worried.

Paul describes his situation, expressing the way being in Christ (Anointed King) shapes life, death, calm before opponents, hope. He proclaimed a new emperor in a center of Roman power and doesn't back down. He wants more boldness: To live is Christ.

The diverse believers in Philippi experience persecution. He wants them to stand firm, but how? Everything they see around them says no. Paul moves from how his own life is shaped by Jesus to how their lives can experience the same power. The love that is the heart of Jesus – God's self-giving love, our response in heart and action – becomes the lens that lets them see what really matters (1:9-10).

## Life Together in Community

Paul knew from experience that genuine community among diverse people is hard.

Crossing boundaries of ethnicity, politics, religion, gender status, enslavement, political rights, family hierarchy, cultural roots, prejudice, distrust, etc., to form friendship, shared life and identity, and united community was/is really hard. If each identity, individual can be separated, all can be drawn back into the dominant civic story.

Paul urges them to think and live as a community defined by the Royal Proclamation of the Anointed King Jesus (Gospel of Christ Jesus) – a serious challenge. But God's Spirit will aid their solidity. Another metaphor: A team of athletes striving like one person for the life of trust in God that flows from this Good News. They reinforce each other and stand with strength for resurrection life against the message of violence and division.

Paul wants them to see their suffering more clearly. Suffering is hard, often destructive.

But it can bring focus, testing what's really important, giving self-knowledge, hope.

## A Single Focus to Unite Diverse People

Paul is leading them toward a poetic description of the Jesus-Event (2:5-11). He prepares by leading them through a meditation on what matters, toward which all must be drawn.

The stress is on minds/hearts shaped by a single focus. Not for a code of correct doctrine.

Paul encourages variety of practice. But a focus on Jesus – life, cross, resurrection.

Without him at center, nothing else makes sense; lets us know God and his loving power.

The flow is from Christ/King to his/our Love in all its dimensions, united by one Spirit to share deep empathy. Paul's joy for them is that single focus of united love and life defined by Jesus. It undermines individualistic strife and creates a community of true mutual support. To live is Christ, who comes to serve and give his life for us.