

Let Us Practice Paul's Teaching and Follow His Example  
(Philippians 4:9)

Introduction:

1. In Philippians 4:9a the apostle Paul instructed the Christians in Philippi to do the things they had learned, received, heard, and seen in him.
  - a. The things they had learned, received, and heard refer to Paul's teaching.
  - b. The things they had seen refer to Paul's example [the things he did].
  - c. In this verse Paul taught the Christians in Philippi to practice his teaching and to follow his example.
  - d. Application: "let us practice Paul's teaching and follow his example."
2. According to Philippians 4:9b, a special blessing is available to those who do this -- "*the God of peace shall be with you.*"
3. In our lesson we are concentrating on an important activity that Paul included in his teaching and example -- "giving thanks."

Discussion:

I. LET US FIRST CONSIDER PAUL'S EXAMPLE OF GIVING THANKS

- A. Paul often expressed his gratitude to God.
  1. He thanked God for his brethren and friends.
    - a. Philippians 1:3-4
    - b. Colossians 1:3-4
  2. He thanked God for food during a storm (Acts 27:35-36).
  3. He thanked God when his friends met him on his way to Rome (Acts 28:15).
  4. He thanked God for the victory He gives (1 Corinthians 15:57).
  5. In addition to being grateful to God, . . .
- B. Paul was thankful to Christ for saving him and for putting him into the ministry, even though he had abused the Lord's followers (1 Timothy 1:12-17).
- C. These passages and many more indicate that Paul was thankful.
- D. We learn from 1 Corinthians 11:1 why we must follow his example.
- E. Let us turn our attention to . . .

II. PAUL'S TEACHING ON GIVING THANKS

- A. In his letters Paul often taught Christians to be thankful.
  1. Colossians 2:6-7; 4:2
  2. 1 Thessalonians 5:18
  3. 1 Timothy 2:1
- B. We learn from 1 Corinthians 14:37 why Paul's instructions must be obeyed.
- C. Paul associated giving thanks with other subjects, including:
  1. giving (2 Corinthians 9:6-7, 12-15)
  2. singing (Ephesians 5:19-20)
  3. avoiding anxiety (Philippians 4:6)
  4. having the peace of God in the heart and being in the body (Colossians 3:15)
  5. submitting to the Lord's authority (Colossians 3:17).

Conclusion:

1. We have shown from the Scriptures how Paul was thankful and how he taught the Lord's followers to be thankful.
2. In closing, let us consider how Paul thanked God for the way some people in Rome changed (Romans 6:17-18).
3. He showed earlier in Romans 6:3-4 when this change takes place.
4. Have you been baptized into Christ?