

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Philippians 2:1-4**.
- B. Whenever preachers talk about the NT pattern they usually talk about doctrinal issues such as worship, the plan of salvation, and church organization.
- C. The "pattern" in this lesson, deals with Paul's attitude.
- D. We should pattern our lives as close to the doctrine of the NT as possible, and this includes our attitude.

I. PAUL'S PATTERN--AN APPRECIATION FOR PREACHING.

- A. See Philippians 1:15-18.
- B. In the first century there were preachers who were preaching Christ, but not for the right reasons. Paul was able to separate the message from the messenger.
- C. Some practical applications are:
 1. Can we overlook the faults in others to see the good they are doing?
 2. Do we allow others' weaknesses of the flesh to dampen our appreciation for Christ being proclaimed?
 3. Can you share your life? Are you conducting your life in a manner worthy of the gospel? (Phil. 1:27; 1Th. 2:8).
- D. Is appreciation for those who minister part of your pattern?

II. PAUL'S PATTERN--ENCOURAGEMENT, LOVE, AFFECTION & COMPASSION.

- A. See Philippians 2:1-4.
- B. Attitude is everything. Christians are to do all things without grumbling and complaining (Phil. 2:5,14).
- C. Some practical applications:
 1. Are the things mentioned in 2:1-2 part of your life, as God has given? If so, they need to be part of your life to others.
 2. Does your life, "make my joy complete" in others? Can others truly say it is a joy to be around you?
 3. Chuck Swindoll in, *Strengthening Your Grip* talks about the difference between appreciation and affirmation.
 - a. Appreciation is to like what a person does; in a sense by works they have earned it.
 - b. Affirmation does deeper. We like a person because of who they are (no matter if they succeed or fail).
- D. Are encouragement, love, affection and compassion part of your pattern?

III. PAUL'S PATTERN--HUMILITY, SELFLESSNESS, AND CHRIST-LIKENESS.

- A. See Philippians 3:4-8.
- B. Paul had much to be proud of in his life. He had accomplished much and received the honors of men. But he did NOT want these things to be part of his pattern!
- C. Does the resume of your life include Christ, or is it just one big brag sheet? Paul's resume is in Phil. 4:13.
- D. Some practical applications:
 1. Whose interests are foremost in your mind? Got a problem(s) in your life... TURN LOOSE OF IT! There are some things I have control of and there are some things I have no control over. I must learn to turn loose of the things I cannot control or handle.
 2. I can't afford to be so prideful, so selfish, and so egotistical to think I can have my way every time on everything.

3. Even Jesus could not control the will of God for Him to go to cross. X turned-loose of it, and went.
- E. Are humility, selflessness, and X-likeness part of your pattern?

IV. PAUL'S PATTERN—PRAYER WITH THANKSGIVING.

- A. See Philippians 4:4-7.
- B. Even with all of Paul's persecutions and problems he could rejoice in the Lord. He was able to separate the good from the bad and focus on the good that is in X.
- C. It takes very little effort to find fault; may we resolve to work hard to find the good in people and life. Let's work hard to forebear (withhold punishment) with one another.
- D. Some practical applications:
 1. An active prayer life means practicing forgiveness (Mk. 11:25).
 2. A selfish prayer life means you will ask amiss (Jas. 4:3).
 3. An unselfish prayer life means thankfulness in all things.
- E. Is prayer with thanksgiving part of your pattern?

V. PAUL'S PATTERN--CONTENTMENT WITH MATERIAL THINGS.

- A. See Philippians 4:10-12,19.
- B. Where does your sense of value come from? Is it wealth or God?
Where does your sense of accomplishment come from? Is it spiritual or temporal things?
- C. Where does your sense of peace with self come from? Is it the praise of men or the spiritual sustenance of God?
- D. Some practical applications: -
 1. Do we look for how we can use our material things for spiritual good? (Phil. 4:17).
 2. Do you ever feel you have an abundance? Or are you always looking for more? (Phil. 4:18).
 3. Does your strength come from your bank account balance or from X?
- E. Is contentment with material things part of your pattern?

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The pattern of our life should be one that doctrinally follows the pattern of the Scriptures.
- B. The pattern of our life should also include:
 1. An appreciation for those who minister.
 2. Encouragement, love, affection, and compassion.
 3. Humility, selflessness, and X-likeness.
 4. Prayers with thanksgiving.
 5. Contentment with material things.
- C. The opportunity is now: make things right with God.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.