

Welcome To

Malvern Bible Chapel



The Secret of Paul's Contentment (How to Write an Effective Acknowledgment Letter)

**Final Message in the Philippian Series
Philippians 4:10-23**

**Robert L. Watt
March 6, 2016**

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

Philippians 4:10-23 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

Philippians 4:10-23 (NKJV) (cont.)

¹⁴ Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. ¹⁵ Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. ¹⁶ For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. ¹⁸ Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things *sent* from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. ²⁰ Now to our God and Father *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

Philippians 4:10-23 (NKJV) (cont.)

²¹ Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.²² All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

²³ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

Introduction:



"Paul in Prison," by Karen Anne Graeser

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

Introduction:

- Philippians is a thank-you letter written from prison in Rome.
- Reflects what was on his mind (see also 4:8)—Christ.
- Chap. 1: The message of our ministry—the Gospel of Christ
- Chap. 2: The model for our ministry—the example of Christ
- Chap. 3: The motive of our ministry—the reward of Christ
- Chap. 4: The means of our ministry—the provision of Christ
(from Wiersbie)
- The financial provision of Christ led Paul to contentment.
- What is contentment?
- Where is contentment learned?
- What was the secret of Paul's contentment? There are 3:

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

Body of Lesson:

1. The sovereignty of God (4:10)

- Best way to reach Caesar's palace and household (1:12-14; 4:22).
- Best way to encourage us as well.
- Supernatural timing of the gift sent by the Christians at Philippi.
- Other examples of God's sovereign providence in Scriptures:
 - Substitute for Isaac (Gen. 22:14)
 - Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 45:5; 50:20)
 - Ruth and her kinsman-redeemer Boaz
- Personal examples of God's providence on the last trip to the DRC:
 - Provision of funds & DRC visa (including delays!)
 - Timing of contacts and provision of pharmaceutical factory
- Attitude is so critical!

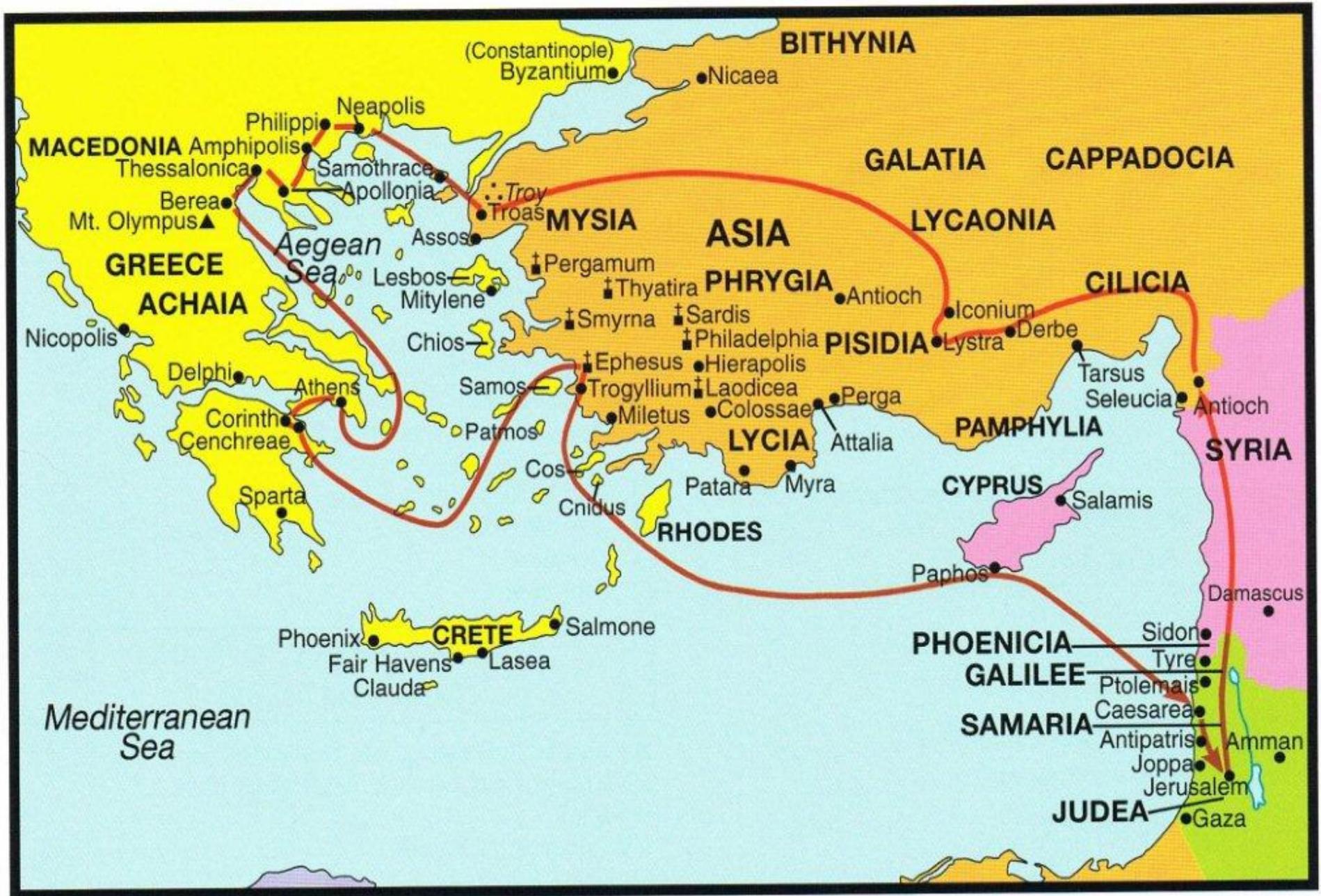
The Secret of Paul's Contentment

1. The sovereignty of God (4:10)
2. The strengthening of God (4:11-13)
 - Paul is not complaining; his contentment and happiness doesn't depend on circumstances or things.
 - He has all the resources he needs within him.
 - He knew what it meant to be brought low, humbled, suffer need.
 - He also knew what it meant to abound and be full (harder test).
 - Paul experienced the strengthening grace of Christ within him (2 Cor. 4:7-11; 12:7-10).
 - He learned the secrets of contentment by the experiences he passed through; the strength of Christ and Paul's union with Him (Jn. 15:5).
 - Who or what are we trusting in? When all the things are stripped away and we experience "death of a vision", we can still be content in God who is sovereign and strengthens us! Wait patiently on God!

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

1. The sovereignty of God (4:10)
2. The strengthening of God (4:11-13)
3. The supply of God (4:14-20)
 - Although Paul is not dependent on outside circumstances, he still appreciated the gift that the Philippians sent him. As he talks about money he uses three analogies to compare their giving to:
 - a. **A flourishing plant** (4:10)—Paul rejuvenated after a “spiritual winter”.
 - b. **An investment** (4:11-17)—Giving leads to fruit that abounds to their account; their generous material gift pays rich spiritual dividends.
 - c. **A sacrifice** (4:18-20)—In acknowledging their gift (“I have all and abound”) and signing the receipt, Paul commends them for giving their best to God, just as the best animals were sacrificed. What are you doing with your best? (**Rom. 12:1**)
 - Their gift was from God and it demonstrated a pattern of giving, even to their own poverty. God would repay them *according* to His riches.

Paul's Second Journey



The Secret of Paul's Contentment

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3. The supply of God (4:14-20)
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 - Their gift was from God and it demonstrated a pattern of giving, even to their own poverty. God would repay them *according* to His riches.
 - The thought of all this leads to a spontaneous doxology of praise!

The Secret of Paul's Contentment

Conclusion and Application:

Paul signs this beautiful and touching letter in his own hand, greets the saints at Philippi, and sends the letter back to them via Epaphroditus—700 mile journey that would take 1 month!

What lessons can we see from this study? Here are 3:

1. **Look up**—see God sovereignly in control of our circumstances.
2. **Look in**—see God strengthening me in all my situations.
3. **Look out**—see God supplying others in all their needs.

Therefore, because of all of these reasons, I can have real contentment, and so can you!

Missionary Update

Update on future plans:

- Two CMMML trips/year starting in 2015 (April, December)
- Next trip planned for March 23-April 30, 2016
- First half of time in Bunia (arriving via Entebbe, Uganda)

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)



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 - Teaching/Encouraging in other assemblies



Assembly at Bunia with offering

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Central Pharmacy at
CME-Nyankunde
(destroyed in 2002 and
now a classroom)





With Dr. Mike Upio

With church medical team for
Strategic Planning Workshop





With Paul Kabanga and family of
Mandro & Kiiza Butso in Bunia



Three generations of national pharmacists:
Simon Ngbape, Pascal Gisenya, Paul Kabanga



With Legal Representative Katho of the CE-39 assemblies at CMMML prior to trip



The church's "Field of Dreams" outside Bunia (9 Hectares = 22 acres)

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Jean Nguna and Bebwa Simon
Stop SIDA (AIDS), Bunia



AIDS patient dramatically helped
in Bunia

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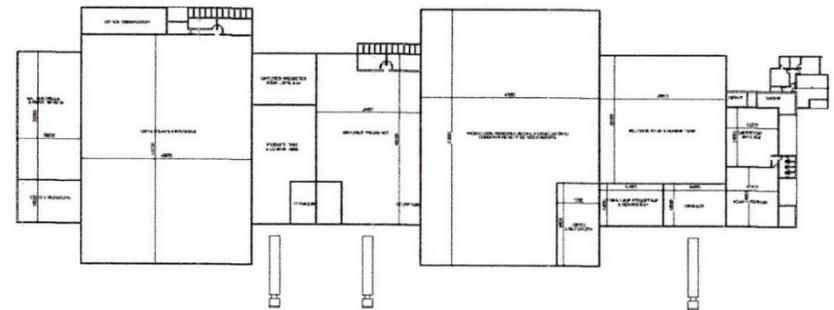
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 - Working on plans for new SAV Pharmaceutical Factory
 - Add plans to be regional distribution center for essential medicines?



With Victor and Brigitte Ngezayo in Goma



Surveying “Field of Dreams” Rangira site
(28 Ha = 69 acres, given free!)
for new Soins Alternatifs pour la Vie
(SAV) Pharmaceutical Factory and
preliminary architectural drawings



USINE PHARMACEUTIQUE SAV



USINE PHARMACEUTIQUE SAV (SOINS ALTERNATIFS POUR LA VIE)

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Plesion's Triple Nutritional Therapy (TNT) products that could some day be made in the DRC



Francoise, heads up AIDS work in Goma

AIDS patient transformed in Goma



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Teaching and encouraging in the main Goma assembly



Bob & Glenda Watt

Serving the Lord in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Support: c/o CMML, Inc., P.O. Box 13, Spring Lake, NJ 07762

Home: 121 Debbie Drive, Coatesville, PA 19320 Tel: (610) 857-2220

Email: RobertWatt121@gmail.com