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Location, Location, Location!!!



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #333 ~

In real estate, it is often said that location is the number one selling point. You want to live in a climate you like, an attractive area, a clean neighborhood, a location close to family, work, stores, church, etc. This was true in our recent move to our new home. But as a Christian, you must understand the truth about your location not just in a physical way, but as it relates to living for the Lord. Phil. 1 speaks a lot about this.

Last time we talked about your **spiritual location**, about being *"in Christ"* (Phil. 1:1). The phrase *"in Christ"* is a loaded, power-packed phrase that has much to say about your relationship with Christ and your Christian life. We learned that being *"in Christ"* is spiritual, constant, and glorious. And it results in being loved, blessed, protected, purposeful, seated with God, eternal security, and a perfect future.

Then we talked about your **physical location**. Paul wrote to believers

“in Philippi”. So too God has located you, positioned you in a particular place for His purposes. Your physical location – your home, neighborhood, city, or church – is your base of operation, your physical and spiritual headquarters. It’s the place where you love and serve God and others, the place from which you witness to the lost and disciple the saved.

God has always had His people in physical places. That’s the way it has been and will be for the Jews. That’s the way it has been and will be for the Christians – we live in our physical home and, in the future, we will live in an eternal home, a place Christ is preparing for us (Jn. 14:1-3). And God is sovereign over our physical location – where we live in these final years before Christ’s return has already been determined by God. Acts 17:26

Then we briefly talked about your **relational location**, that you have relationships with believers, and you are to be spiritually connected and close to them. These relationships, especially in our day, aren’t limited to a physical location, but can happen with anyone anyplace on earth. It can be with your spouse, a church member, or a missionary, someone in your home, half way down the street, or half way around the world.

Phil. 1 talks extensively about Paul’s relational location, how he was spiritually and intimately connected to other believers. Paul had relationships with believers who were physically located with him in a jail, but he was also relationally located with the believers in Philippi and, as we know, with those in other churches and cities. Let’s learn more about Paul’s relational location with believers and apply this to our lives.

Phil. 1:3-5. *“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you”* (vs. 3). The Christians in Philippi were on Paul’s mind – he had not forgotten them, he remembered them, he was thinking about them. But Paul was not just thinking about them, he loved them and was thanking God for

them. More than that, he was praying for them, and it was a joyful, emotional prayer. The reason Paul gladly prayed for them was because he knew they loved Christ, and they loved him, and were united with him in this most important work, preaching the gospel of Christ. But there's much more:

Phil. 1:6. *"… He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."* Paul understood God's overall purpose and plan for these believers. He saw the big picture, that God Himself had begun His divine work in them, and would keep working in them until the day of Christ, that day when their salvation would be complete, when they would be physically saved. Paul's love for them and his knowledge of salvation motivated him to express to them his confidence – he wanted them to be convinced of God's glorious and eternal work in their lives.

Phil. 1:7-11. *"God is my witness how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus"* (vs. 8). Paul continues to talk about the reason for his relational connection with these Christians. It says he felt for them, he thought deeply of them, they were in his heart. Paul and these Philippians truly loved God and loved each other. Though physically apart, they had the same spiritual Father, Savior, and Spirit. They were supernaturally related, were sharing in God's grace, and were united in the work of the church.

Paul loved these believers with affection and feeling, the compassion of Christ. The love he had for these saints moved him to pray for them, specifically that their love for God would be shown by their holy lives and wise decisions with the result that they would do His will, be fruitful, and be God-glorifying.

Phil. 1:12-20. *"Christ will now, as always, be exalted in my body"* (vs. 20). Paul was spiritually connected to many believers, some physically nearby and others faraway. And their relationship was for Christ, motivated by Christ, and centered on Christ. It was Christ being

preached, believers growing and becoming mature in Christ, and Christ being exalted. No matter his physical location, whether he was at home, in a jail, in a synagogue, or out in public, Paul's message and life was always Jesus Christ.

What were some of the keys to Paul's close relationship with Christians?
* Paul greatly loved the believers in both words and actions.
* He was open with them – he told them how he was doing and what he was doing.
* He told them the works of God, and that God was sovereignly working all things together for good, and even though he was in jail, he was still preaching the gospel.
* He told them they were part of his life, for God would answer their prayers for him.
* He reminded these believers that they were on the same team, had the same goal, and were united in their work for Christ and His glory.

Phil. 1:21-26. *"To me, to live is Christ and to die is gain…* (vs. 21). Paul was summing up life in the simplest, most powerful way possible. And for Paul, *"to live is Christ"* meant living for Christ which meant living for people. Paul knew it would be better for him to be in heaven, but knew God wanted him to stay on earth and sacrifice his life for others. Paul was humble and put the interests of others first (Ph. 2:3-4), seen in that he loved them, served them, prayed for them, and shared Christ with them, which resulted in them experiencing real *"progress and joy in the faith."*

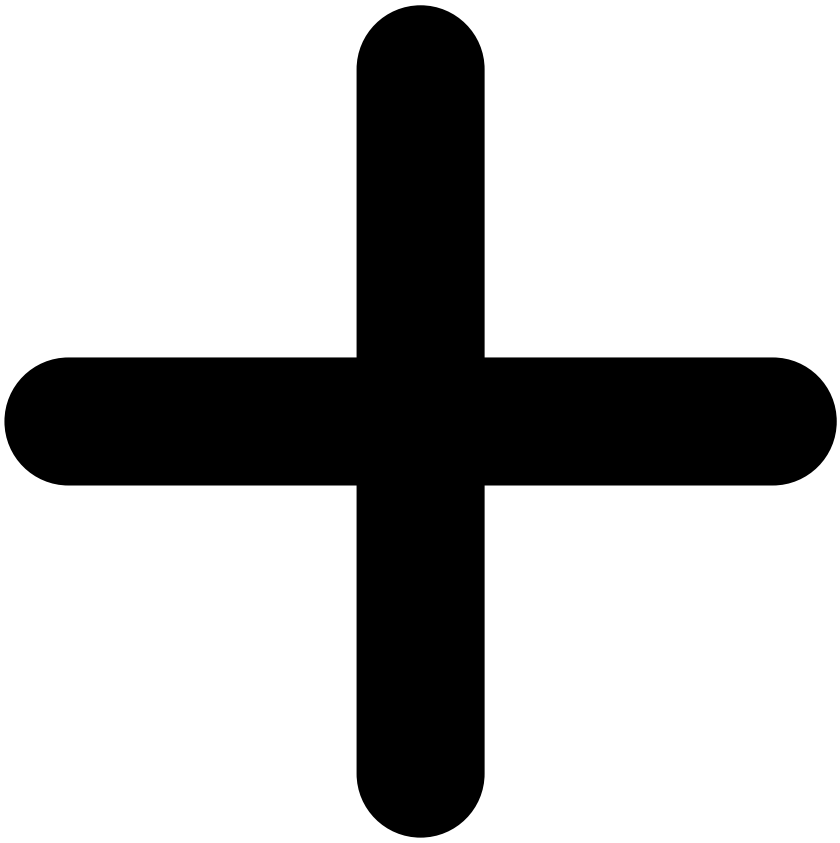
No matter where you live (**physical location**), you are in Christ (**spiritual location**), and you are to love and live for others (**relational location**). In this post, we have focused on your relational location, that you are to be relationally connected to and close to other Christians, whether they live near or far. As you are in Christ and active in your relationship with Christ, then you will be active in your relationships with others. You will be praying for them, loving them, spending time with them, worshiping God with them, serving them, serving with them,

and sharing God's word with them.

I often wonder what our relationships will look like in the last years of the end-times. What I do know is that God is sovereign over all our relationships – He chooses who we are with, when we will be living, where we will live, and why. And Christ is in charge of the church, its relational configuration and the purpose of its members. *"God has placed the members of the body, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired"* (1 Cor. 12:18; Eph. 2:19-22, 4:12-16). What I also know is that your relationship with others is essential, is critically important for the end-times' work and glory of Christ.

Jesus Christ is building the church, and the gates of hell, the work of the devil, and the demons, and the Antichrist will not stop it. The church will continue to grow and will complete all the work Christ has for her in these last years leading up to His return to rapture the church and judge the world (Matt. 24:9-14, 24:31, 28:19-20). *"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."* Eph. 3:19-20

P.S. I want to remind you of Matthew 24, what I believe is the most important prophecy chapter in the Bible. I would encourage you to read Matt. 24, along with this article, *"Matthew 24 – The Most Important Prophecy Chapter in the Bible,"* which is being read by more people than anything else this past week on this blog site.



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