

## **Week 2 - The Gospel Advances (1:1-18)**

### **A. Paul's Greeting (v. 1-2)**

1. Author: Paul and Timothy
  - a. Servants (Dulos = slaves) of Jesus Christ
  - b. Timothy is a beloved son in the faith and trusted coworker known by Philippi thus he would corroborate Paul's testimony
2. Audience:
  - a. Saints in Christ Jesus - All the "set apart" in Philippi (All Christians not just special ones who were especially pious and good)
  - b. Deacons - "those who serve" the church at Philippi
  - c. Overseers - "Elders" or "Bishops" who guard the flock and instruct it
3. Intro: Grace and Peace
  - a. God's Grace must come before we can experience His Peace

### **B. Paul's Reasons to be Thankful for the Church (v. 3-8)**

1. Their Fellowship in the Gospel
  - a. This is not merely sharing food and fun - this is partnership in the work of the Gospel
  - b. Think of the differences of a Lydia, the Slave Girl, and the Philippian Jailor and yet they were also united in Christ and partakers of the Gospel.
  - c. \*Interesting Note: Fellowship is used 3 times in the book in a Trinitarian way
    1. 1:5 - Gospel of God (Father)
    2. 2:1 - With the Spirit (Holy Spirit)
    3. 3:10 - Sufferings of Christ (Son)
2. God's Faithfulness in Salvation (v. 6) "And I am sure of this, that he who began..."
  - a. God's Work
    1. Salvation was all of God - He began it and will bring it to completion
  - b. Good Work
    1. We are saved from eternal condemnation and wrath - Good News
  - c. Sure Work
    1. God starts it, and he Finishes what he starts.
  - d. \*Our confidence is in God - who calls, leads, completes. He did not just save us for us - he saved us for a good work!

### **C. Paul's Prayer for the Church (v. 9-11) - 4 Requests for the Philippians**

1. Their Love will abound
  - a. This is love with true discernment and knowledge as we will see in his warnings against false teachers (3:2, 18-19)
2. They Approve the things that are excellent
  - a. He is praying for discernment and discipline to see priorities rightly and make the wise spiritual decisions.
3. They would be Pure and Blameless
  - a. Pure = "sun-tested" and referred to ancient pottery dealers who would fill small cracks in their pottery with wax to cover the imperfections. Buyers would sun test the pottery to see if the item was free from defect.
  - b. Blameless = "without offense" - referencing our relational lives - we should live lives of integrity being careful never to cause anyone to sin.
4. They would be Filled with the Fruit of Righteousness (or Fruit Righteousness Produces)
  - a. Paul's desire is that they would have a rich spiritual harvest of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)

- b. This would only come “through Jesus Christ” who is the vine (John 15:5) and without which we can do nothing

D. Paul Rejoices in his imprisonment (v. 12-18)

- 1. Paul Saw the good in his circumstances
  - a. Opportunities to Evangelize Unbelievers
    - 1. Chained to a Roman guard which ultimately led to change in Caesar’s household (4:22)
  - b. The Advance of the Gospel Despite Opposition
    - 1. Two Types of Preachers in Rome in their feelings of Paul
      - a. Preaching out of Envy and Rivalry
        - i. Many who had been in Rome and had positions of influence and were jealous of Paul’s appearance in Rome and saw his chains as an opportunity to afflict him.
      - b. Preaching out of Goodwill
        - i. Others admired Paul and were encouraged by his chains to stand up for the Gospel in their circumstances.

E. In Class Work:

- 1. Together - Read the section from this week (Philippians 1:1-18). Discuss each subdivision together from the outline (Paul’s Greeting; Paul’s Reason for Thankfulness; Paul’s Prayer for the Church; Paul’s Rejoicing in his Chains)

F. Questions to Consider

- 1. In what ways can you help to promote true fellowship in your church and with other Christian friends?
- 2. Paul prayed that the Philippians would abound in love. Read 1 Corinthians 13 and suggest three or more ways in which Christian love may be clearly demonstrated in your circumstances.
- 3. Paul rejoiced even in his chains. What made this possible for Paul and how can we follow his example in our own lives.
- 4. Paul’s prayer for the Philippian believers was focused on their spiritual lives and health. How does this compare with our prayers for other believers?

G. For Further Study / Homework

- 1. HOMEWORK: Read Philippians 1:1-30 this week with a focus on vs. 19-30 for next week’s study. Read Daily. Write down, highlight, or note questions, comments, or things you notice in the text throughout the week to discuss next Sunday.
- 2. The apostle Paul identified salvation as God’s work (1:6) Read Ephesians 1:3-14. When did God begin this work? What aspects of this work can you identify?
- 3. Pauls also described salvation as a sure work that will not fail. What makes it such a sure work? Read John 10:27-30; Romans 8:31-39; 1 Peter 1:3-5.
- 4. Paul had a heart of concern for unbelievers. Read Romans 9:1-3 for insight into the depth of his concern. Read Matthew 9:36-38. How was Jesus affected by the sight of the multitudes? What did he teach his disciples on this occasion?