



A LIFE

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

OF JOY

Paul's Letter to the Church of Philippi: A Message of Love & Encouragement.

From:

- *the Apostle Paul, and from Timothy - bond-servants of Jesus Christ.*

doulos - Gk. - bond-servants: one who voluntarily (by an act of the will) gives themselves over to the will of another, for the rest of their lives.

Note: a term of highest dignity. (Strong's Concordance)

Paul's Letter to the Church of Philippi: A Message of Love & Encouragement.

From:

- *the Apostle Paul, and from Timothy - bond-servants of Jesus Christ.*

To:

- *all of God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, including the church leaders and deacons.*
 - Paul is writing to everyone who loves Jesus ...
 - he includes the leaders, but the letter is for everyone!
 - they are all holy, because they are "in Christ Jesus".
 - they are in Christ, and Christ is in them!
 - they are set apart (holy) & called for a purpose.

Acts 16: Paul and the Christians of Philippi shared a relationship forged through hardship in Christ.

- spiritual confrontation,
- demonic deliverance,
- arrest & imprisonment,
- beatings,
- prayer,
- signs & wonders,
- baptism,
- ... new life in Jesus Christ.

all forging a deep bond that produced in these Philippian Christians:

- genuine concern for their first pastor.
- out of their poverty - generosity.

and produced within Paul:

- joy and thankfulness for them.
- pride & affection over them.

Their life together in Jesus had grown within them a deep love for each other characterized by one word ... JOY!

¹⁰ I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again ... ¹⁵ You were the only ones who gave me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. ¹⁶ Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once ...

¹⁸ At the moment I have all I need—and more, because I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus!

Philippians 4

Summary – the purpose of Paul’s letter: *“Thank you for your love & concern!!”*

- Paul is not writing to correct, instruct or rebuke them ... he’s writing because he deeply loves them ... and they love him!
 - he’s writing from a heart filled with joy!

... we see in Paul’s letter the heart of a pastor for his congregation, and the heart of a congregation for their pastor.

This Week: Christian joy – some key ingredients. (Philippians 1:3-6)

³ Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. ⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership with me in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. ⁶ And I am confident of this: that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

This Week: Joy – some key ingredients. (Philippians 1:3-6)

1. Joy is relational. (v. 3)

³ Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God ...

Truth #1:

- Joy is found in relationship.
 - *Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God.*
- it is not a response to circumstances, but to healthy relationships with God, others and self.
 - ... circumstances are the primary cause of depression in our culture

Reminder: wealth is a *relational* measurement ... not a *material* one.

- God, others, ourselves, Creation

This Week: Joy – some key ingredients. (Philippians 1:3-6)

1. Joy is relational. (v. 3)

³Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God.

2. Christian Joy is fueled by partnering with others in Christ. (v.v. 4-5)

- *⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy,*
- *⁵because of your **partnership** with me in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now.*

*partnership - Gk. - **koinonia**: active participation together in Jesus, marked by a refusal to withhold anything from another.*

¹... if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing (**koinonia**) in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

Philippians 2

¹⁰ I want to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship (**koinonia**) of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death ...

Philippians 3

Truth #2: Partnering in the gospel (*koinonia*) is not hard to measure.

1. Prayer ... we don't withhold it (v. 3)
 - Paul was praying for all of them ... consistently and joyfully.
 - though in prison, himself ... his concern was for them.

- ✓ *my prayer for you is that your love may grow deeper and deeper in spiritual knowledge and insight ... (chapter 1)*
- ✓ *I am eager to send Epaphroditus back to you, so you will rejoice in seeing him again, and I will be less anxious for you ... (chapter 2)*
- ✓ *Watch out for those who do evil ... join with others in following my example ... (chapter 3)*
- ✓ *Do not be anxious about anything ... as you bring your prayers to God, being filled with His peace beyond understanding ... (chapter 4)*
- ✓ *I know that God will meet your needs out of His glorious riches ... (ch. 4)*

Truth #2: Partnering in the gospel (*koinonia*) is not hard to measure.

1. Prayer. (v. 3)

2. Serving ... we don't withhold it (v.v. 4-5)

- the Philippians laboured with Paul to proclaim the reign of Jesus, and demonstrate life together under His authority.
- they both brought to Jesus the skills, resources & gifts they had to offer.
 - the Philippians delighted in providing for Paul ... again & again!
 - Paul delighted in praying for them, encouraging them, instructing them and reminding them of God's promises ... both now and forever.

Part of life together is that we do not spare our hand where it can perform a service, and that we do not assume that our schedule is our own to manage, but allow it to be arranged by God ...

We serve one another on the basis of the help we both need. We admonish one another to God the way that Christ bids us to go. We warn one another against the disobedience that is our common destruction. We are gentle and we are severe with one another, for we know both God's kindness and God's severity. We are not afraid of one another, since both of us have only God to fear. We understand very well what is meant when someone speaks God's comfort or God's admonition to us, perhaps in words that are even halting and unskilled, (and in doing so) we understand why God has bestowed Christian brotherhood upon us.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Truth #2: Partnering in the gospel (*koinonia*) is not hard to measure.

1. Prayer. (v. 3)
2. Serving. (v.v.4-5)
3. Generosity ... we don't withhold it. (v. 5)
 - their lives were for Jesus ... they were all in.
 - they were contributors, not consumers.

you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now ...¹⁸ At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus.

Philippians 4

This Week: Joy – some key ingredients. (Philippians 1:3-6)

1. Joy is relational. (v. 3)
2. Christian Joy is fueled by partnering with others in Christ. (v.v. 4-5)
3. Christian Joy lives in the present ... but anticipates the future. (v.v. 6)

⁶And I am confident of this: that God,

- *who began the good work within you,*
- *will continue his work*
- *until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*

There are many who are headed for destruction ... they think only about this life here on earth. ²⁰ But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.

Philippians 4

Question This Morning:

1. How is your *Life Together*?

- who is looking out for you?
- who are you adding your gifts & commitment to?

A Christian needs others because of Jesus Christ ... he needs their gifts and their encouragement. A Christian comes to others only through Jesus Christ ... he receives the gospel through the words and example of others. A Christian has been chosen from eternity, accepted in time and united forever by Jesus Christ ... through the incarnation, our Lord has created a new community: the Community of the King.

Bonhoeffer