

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-11

REVIEW...

- **INTRODUCTION...**
 - The theme of the Book of Philippians is Joy – we are to rejoice always in the Lord!
 - Chapter 1 – Rejoice in suffering – Paul wrote the book while he was in prison...
 - Chapter 2 – Rejoice in serving – following the example given to us by Jesus...
 - Chapter 3 – Rejoice in believing – everything else in life is trash compared to Jesus...
 - Chapter 4 – Rejoice in giving – investing in the work of the Lord!
- **PHILIPPIANS 1:1-3**
 - The opening of the letter is unique – Paul introduces himself as a servant of Jesus...
 - A unusual greeting from Paul (*only 3 times*) - he usually opens with 'Paul an Apostle'...
 - But Paul did not need to establish his authority in order to correct this church...
 - Instead he wanted to come along side them as a servant and build them up in their walk!
 - The letter was not just written to the believers - it was written to the leaders...
 - Paul saw there was no reason for two letters - one for the saints / one for the leaders...
 - Because the saints were grounded - they could receive the same counsel as the leaders!

PAUL'S GREETING TO THE CHURCH... (3 THINGS)

- **1ST – PAUL'S THANKFULNESS FOR THE CHURCH... VS. 3-6 (3 THINGS)**
 - 1st – Paul was thankful in spite of his trials... vs. 3
 - It had been about 10 years since Paul had established the church in Philippi...
 - Paul was now in prison – you would think Paul would be focused on his problems...
 - But instead he gave thanks every time he thought of the saints in Philippi...
 - The thought of the faith of believers there was enough to put a smile on his face!
 - **We tend to think that life revolved around us – we only think about our needs...**
 - **But when we are self focused it is misery – only seeing our problems / troubles...**
 - **Instead focus on the blessings of God – the work He is doing all around you!**
 - The church in Philippi was an inspiration to Paul in prison...
 - **When people think about us – do they give thanks for us...**
 - **Do we inspire people – encourage them with our walk in Jesus...**
 - **God calls us to be an example to others – an inspiration pointing others to Jesus!**
 - 2nd – Paul was thankful because of their fellowship... vs. 4-5
 - Paul always mentioned the church in his prayers with a heart full of joy...
 - Paul did not pray for the church because he was concerned for them...
 - He prayed for them because of his great love for them – he was proud of them...
 - The reason was because of their fellowship in the Gospel from the 1st day – till now!
 - From the moment Paul arrived in Philippi – sharing the Gospel with Lydia...
 - The church had been a friend to Paul because of the Grace of Jesus Christ!

- We tend to hang out with people who have the same interests as we do...
 - If we work in the 'field' – we like to talk with other people who have the same job...
 - If we like motorcycles – we like to talk with people who have the same interest...
 - But fellowship is not about hanging out and talking about our interests...
 - Fellowship is about believers building up each other in their common faith in Christ!
 - We have fellowship by getting into the Word together and talking about Jesus!
- Like Paul the fellowship is not limited by location...
 - I have had fellowship with people from all over the world – no similar interests...
 - Every notice when you walk into a room with believers in Jesus...
 - Even if you have never met them before - it feels like a family reunion...
 - There is immediate sweet fellowship through our common faith in Jesus!
 - Fellowship that is not limited by distances – we can continue to pray for each other!
- 3rd - Paul was confident in the church... vs. 6
 - Because Paul was thinking about the church / had fellowship with them...
 - He knew that God was working to finish the work that He had begun in the church...
 - Do you know if the person sitting next to you is going to heaven...
 - Do you know if they are going through a hard time – struggling in their walk...
 - We are called to invest in one another's lives as believers – encourage each other...
 - Supporting each other so we have confidence in our walk in Jesus!
 - Till the day when Jesus comes back again...
 - We began the race the day we believed in Jesus - it ends the day we die...
 - We run the race to receive the prize - Jesus Christ - **Philippians 3:14**...
 - So often as believers we start off well in our race - but we do not finish well...
 - We treat it like a sprint - but after a while we get tired / distracted / and give up...
 - So how do we run the race - running strong till the day Jesus comes back...
 - We get tired because we start to have confidence in something other than Jesus...
 - We begin to depend on ourselves / other people / or some program...
 - But they did not save us – and they cannot finish what they did not start...
 - Our job is to keep our eyes on Jesus – believing He will finish what He started!
 - **Hebrews 12:2** - “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...”
 - Maturing in Jesus does not happen overnight...
 - A tree does not bear fruit the day after you plant it – it takes time...
 - And a tree cannot make itself grow any faster – no matter how hard it tries...
 - We also are not made perfect in a day – growing in Jesus is takes time...
 - There is nothing we can do to speed things up – God will finish us in His time!
- 2ND – PAUL'S LOVE FOR THE CHURCH... VS. 7-8
 - The church in Philippi had a very special place in Paul's heart...
 - Because the church had stood with Paul while he was in chains...
 - They church was not ashamed of Paul even though he was in prison...
 - We have a tendency to avoid people when they are going through tough times...
 - **Proverbs 19:7** – “A poor man is shunned by his relatives - how much more do his friends avoid him! He pursues them with pleading, they are nowhere to be found.”
 - Yet it is in those times when people need us the most – when we show our love!

- Because they stood with Paul in the defense of the Gospel...
 - Defense – *apologia* - defense / reasoned statement / argument (*apologetics*)
 - It is important to be able to give a defense for our faith in Jesus
 - We do not need to be able to answer every question – know every verse...
 - But we should be able to answer questions - tell people about Jesus!
 - **I Peter 3:15** - “If you are asked about your Christian hope... be ready to explain it.”
- o The result was Paul had a great love for the church in Philippi...
 - Not because of what the church had done for Paul – but because of Jesus Christ...
 - When we share the Gospel of Grace with others – we share in the reward...
 - To think one day we might stand in heaven and see someone we know...
 - And have them come over and thank us – for telling them about Jesus!
- **3RD – PAUL’S PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH... VS. 9-11 (4 THINGS)**
 - o 1st – Paul prayed the love of the church would overflow more and more... vs. 9
 - Paul wanted the church to overflow in their knowledge of the Love of God...
 - Paul wanted the church to learn how amazing the love of God for them was...
 - A love that took Jesus to the cross - so that we could be saved from our sins...
 - A love that made us the children of God - heirs to all that God has!
 - A love that is too great / too wonderful to fully be able to comprehend...
 - If I asked you to measure out a cup of water – no problem that is not very much...
 - If I asked you to measure the water in the ocean - problem - it is VERY big...
 - The point being we can learn about the Love of God - experience His love...
 - But the Love of God is SO AMAZING - we will never fully understand all of it!
 - In order to have that knowledge (*epi-knosis*) they had to take the time to study...
 - We take the time to learn about the things that are important to us...
 - If we love basketball – we learn all the names of the best players...
 - In the same way if we love Jesus – we will take the time to learn all about Him!
 - **Philippians 3:8** – “Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ.”
 - It is unfortunate we waste so much of our time learning about everything but Jesus...
 - Because honestly everything else in life is trash compared to knowing Jesus!
 - o 2nd – Paul prayed the church would prove (test) what really matters... vs.10
 - The word prove – *dokimos* – means to test to see if something is genuine...
 - In Bible times there was no paper currency – all the money was precious metals...
 - As a result people would ‘shave’ / steal the edges of a gold/silver coin...
 - But there were honest men who would make sure their coins were full weight...
 - They were called ‘dokimos’ – they proved they were doing what was right...
 - Often in life we try and ‘shave’ our time away from God – use it for other things...
 - Rather than going to church on Sunday morning – something else comes up...
 - Rather than taking the time to read the Bible – we veg in front of the TV...
 - We do not choose where our heart is – we do choose where we put our efforts...
 - Wherever we put our money / time / talents - is where our heart will also be!

- Are we focused on the Lord – or caught up in the concerns of this world!
 - If we spend our time focused on life – we will miss out on what is most important!
 - o 3rd – That the church would have a sincere walk – so they would not be offensive...
 - The word sincere – *helikrines* – means to be judged by the sun...
 - Marble statues were very common in Roman culture – one in every yard...
 - But when the masons were carving the statues – they might make a mistake...
 - Rather than starting over – they would use wax to cover up their error...
 - It looked good – until the heat of the sun would melt the wax – revealing the sin...
 - Too many believers today look good – till you take a closer look...
 - They might show up to Bible studies – with a Bible in their hands...
 - But the moment they leave church – they act just like the world around them...
 - When held up to the light of Jesus Christ – they melt like wax under a hot sun!
 - As a result they stumble others – they give a bad impression of Jesus...
 - We can do anything we want as believers – but we need to ask ourselves...
 - 1st - **I Corinthians 6:12** – “You may say, ‘I am allowed to do anything.’ But I reply, ‘Not everything is good for you.’
 - o Can you gamble – can you see that movie – can you go to that party...
 - o It is not a matter of can you – you can do anything you want – but should you!
 - 2nd – **I Corinthians 6:12** – “Even though ‘I am allowed to do anything,’ I must not become a slave to anything.”
 - o Perhaps we enjoy an occasional smoke - is that sin - not in of itself...
 - o But the question is can we stop - who is in control - are we or the habit...
 - o If we are not longer the ones in control of our ‘freedom’ - it is no longer good...
 - o There might be something in your life that comes to mind right now...
 - o Something you have been convicted of - wanted to stop - but not been able to...
 - o If we want to stop - but cannot - then we are not longer in control of our lives...
 - 3rd - **I Corinthians 8:9** – “Do not cause a brother... to stumble.”
 - o One man’s freedom in Christ – can be another man’s undoing...
 - o We need to be sensitive to each other – protecting each other from sin!
 - 4th - **I Corinthians 10:31** – “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”
 - o Make sure whatever you do – or do not do – do it to the glory of God!
- o 4th – Paul prayed the church would be filled with the fruit of righteousness...
 - That the church would continue to show their faith through their actions...
 - It is easy to say we have ‘faith’ and ‘believe’ in Jesus – but the proof is in our actions
 - If we say we’re Christians – but still live like the world – then do we really have faith
 - We bear good fruit through Christ Jesus...
 - The more realize/embrace that – the more we will love/follow Jesus
 - The result of clinging to Jesus is we start to bear good fruit - **John 15:4-5**