

PHILIPPIANS

Finding Joy in Every Season

A Fervent Affection

Philippians 1:1-8

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is there someone that comes to mind that you thank the Lord for often? Is there someone that has had a major influence on your life or has been a partner with you in ministry? Why do you praise the Lord for them?
2. What images and ideas come to mind when you hear the word “fellowship”?

DIG DEEPER

Read Philippians 1:1b

THE SHEPHERDS

As Paul continues his introduction, notice he singles out two groups:

“To all the saints in Christ Jesus....with the _____ and _____”

3. Why do you think these two groups are singled out?

Do you remember last week in Acts 16 how the Philippian church got started? It began with a business woman, a slave girl, a jailer, and some other converts. Isn't it amazing to think that this church that began with such a pagan, diverse bunch soon grew to have spiritual leaders and servants guiding the church in wisdom?

Read Philippians 1:2

THE SALUTATION

4. What do you think you need most in your life right now?
5. What does Paul desire for everyone in this church?

“_____ to you and _____.....”

Paul's greeting was combining a Greek greeting of 'grace' with a Hebrew blessing of 'peace' in verse 2. Perhaps these two words are so familiar to us that we'd easily skim over them. But what Paul has done is just stated two things you and I need most, today, right now!

Paul is talking about a grace that can empower and equip us and a peace that can flow from God into the heart of a believer with an affect in our everyday lives. This is real and possible for every believer, which is why Paul asks for it.

Read Philippians 1:2

THE SOURCE

We can try to seek grace and peace from all sorts of things. Many seek some sort of grace or peace from comforts of this world. But Paul is very specific about where these gifts come from.

“Grace to you and peace from _____ our _____ & the _____”.

Read Philippians 1:3-8

THE SHARED AMBITION

6. How does Paul feel about the Philippian Christians? Why does he feel this way about them?
7. In what ways are Paul & the Philippians partners? What do they share in common?

True fellowship, koinonia, is based on a common mission and purpose. This deep fellowship is not possible unless we are united by a common vision and goal. It is not just cookies and coffee (though it can include them ☺). It is all about Jesus and His kingdom mission!

8. Why do you think Christian fellowship can sometimes seem shallow?

Read & Reflect on Philippians 1:6

9. What stands out to you in this verse?
Who has started a ‘good work’ in the Christians?
Who will complete the ‘good work’? (see also Psalm 138:8 & 1 Corinthians 1:8)
What is the ‘good work’?

BRING IT HOME

1. Where have you experienced true fellowship in the gospel?
2. Reflect back on the good work started in you when you first believed the gospel. How is it an encouragement to know that the Lord will not give up on you but will finish what He started? How can this comfort you when you face trials in life, or are particularly aware of your own sinfulness or weakness?
3. Are you in danger of being doctrinally sound without love for your church? Are you in danger of being a consumer *of* your church rather than a partner *in* your church?

PRAYER POINTS

- Thank the Lord and pray for your church’s pastors and deacons.
- Thank the Lord for the people that have impacted your life to love Christ more and serve Him wholeheartedly. Praise the Lord for the fellowship we can have with others in the gospel.
- Ask the Lord to stir up our hearts with a greater zeal for Christ and His mission and for greater fellowship (koinonia) in our church for Christ’s kingdom mission.
- Praise the Lord that He will sustain His people to the end and will fulfill His purpose for us. Praise Him that He will finish the good work that He started in us.