



PART 1: PARTNERS IN GRACE (1:1-11)

Sermon Notes

Text: Philippians 1:1-11

Intro:

The Church in Philippi was Paul's first church plant in Europe, and his first church plant in a city without a Jewish Synagogue. See Acts 16 for the story.

Philippians 1:1-6

The Philippian church brings Paul joy. It may have been his "favourite" church.

Paul writes, not as an apostle (his title of authority), but as a fellow "servant" (a title of friendship).

Philippians 1:7-8

Paul commends the Philippians' "partnership." This is a term that refers to sharing work and sharing financial responsibility.

Paul and the Philippine church were in "business" together. The business of the gospel.

Are you investing in this business (your church and its ministries)?

Philippians 1:9-11

The content of Paul's prayers for the Philippian church had 3 elements:

1. I'm praying that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight. (v. 9)

In other words: "I pray that you would grow in your understanding of how to love each other well."

2. I'm praying that you may be able to discern what is best (v. 10)

In a world where several moral issues are blurred and distorted, we need God's help to discern what's best.

In the church, with many internal and external challenges, we need God's help to discern what is best.

3. I'm praying that you will be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ (v. 11)

Whatever you're full of will spill out, especially if you're bumped.

Conclusion:

v. 6 "...he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

God is not just a starter; he is a finisher!

Connect Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. What do you love about being a part of a church? What do you find the most challenging about being a part of a church?

Discussion:

1. Read the story of the beginning of the church in Philippi (Acts 16:11-34). What stands out to you in this story? What are the different ways people came to believe the gospel? What strategies did Paul and Silas employ? Where do you see the hand of God in this story?
2. Paul commends the Philippian church for their “partnership in the gospel” (Philippians 1:5). This referred to their friendship and financial support. The word “partnership” was a business term that Paul applied to the work of the church.
 - What is the “business” of the church?
 - What responsibilities do we have to partner with our own church?
 - What responsibilities do we have to partner with ministers (like Paul) who are pioneering ministries outside our own church?
3. Re-read Paul’s prayer for the Philippian church in v. 9-11. What stands out to you? In v. 9 Paul prays that the Philippians would grow in their understanding of how to love each other well. What practical things can we do to love people in our church?

Practice:

This week, consider what it means to partner with your church. What is God asking you to contribute financially? What else is God asking you to contribute (talents, time, volunteering, prayers, etc.)

Pray:

As a Connect Group (and on your own through the week) pray Paul’s prayer over APA:

1. Pray that we would grow in our understanding of how to love each other well.
2. Pray that we would be able to discern what is best...
 - a) in a world with complicated moral issues; and
 - b) in a church with internal and external challenges.
3. Pray that we would be filled with the fruit of righteousness - the character of Christ.