

October 13, 2019 19079-A #2
Philippians 1:1-20
Counterintuitive Christian Joy

- I. John 15:11; 1633. Jesus told his disciples that they were in Him, the True Vine, and that his joy was going to be theirs, even in a fallen world...
- II. Philippians: A classic pastoral letter...
 - A. Written by Paul. c. 60-62 AD
 1. From house arrest in Rome. (1:7) Acts.28:
 - B. Carried by Epaphroditus.
 1. Brought the financial gift from the church and took this latter back.
 - C. Conveys deep gratitude for them and warm, pastoral instructions.
 1. Like an inspired and encouraging thank-you letter.
 - D. One of the main themes is Joy rooted in confidence in God. (root word 14 times)
 1. But it is not a joy that comes from happy circumstances...
- III. Paul's Joy is Counterintuitive because it is Christian (not from this age). 1-18a
 - A. **Counterintuitive. Joy? Really?** He had been either in jail or under arrest for about 4-5 years by this time. Acts 21-28
 1. He went to Jerusalem for a good reason. (financial gift from the Gentile believers)
 - a) *But it caused a riot in the Temple (Jews from Asia). Acts 21:27-29*
 - (1) Accused (falsely) of preaching against Judaism.
 - (2) Beaten until the Romans showed up!
 2. He proclaimed the gospel to the Jews there. Acts 21:37-22:29
 - a) *But it made the riot worse.*
 - b) Gets rescued by being arrested by the Romans, almost gets flogged.
 3. He preached to Israeli leaders, Felix and Drusilla, Agrippa and Bernice. Acts 24-26
 - a) *But he remains in jail in Caesarea for 2 years. Had to appeal to Caesar rather than*
 - b) Finally, they put him on a boat, under guard, to Rome.
 4. He sailed to Rome (under guard) ... Acts 27
 - a) *But ended up in a shipwreck ...*
 5. He landed on Malta...Acts 28
 - a) *But got bit by a snake...*
 6. He finally arrived in Rome...Acts 28:11
 - a) *But remained under house arrest for 2 more years. 28:30*
 7. Which is where he wrote the "prison letters."
 - a) Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon
- IV. Because it is Christian: prompted by the Spirit among God's people in Christ. 1-18
 - A. **His greeting in Christ. 1-2**
 1. Slaves/ bondservants. Paul and Timothy
 2. Saints in Christ Jesus
 - a) Holy Ones = the ones on earth that belong to God.
 - b) *Spiritually/ metaphysically joined to God in Christ.*
 - B. **His Gratitude for shared grace. 4 things. 3-8**
 1. I'm grateful to God for you. 5
 - a) *Who are you grateful for? Why?*
 2. I'm confident of God's work in your life. 6
 - a) He started the work in you and He'll bring it to completion.
 3. I'm close to you because we have shared God's work together. 7
 - a) Shared work. Shared pain.
 4. I miss you a lot. 8
 - a) *It's a good thing to miss people. It means you have a real relationship.*

C. His Prayer for wise and fruitful love. 9-11. And this I pray:

1. That your love may abound still more and more. I Cor. 13:1-3
 - a) Growing in Christ's love is spiritual maturity.
 - b) And we are always being challenged to increase in it. It fades...
2. In real knowledge and discernment. Love is not just a sentimental feeling.
 - a) so that you may be able to discern what's best ... (NIV)
3. So that your life will be the fruit of grace and demonstrate that God is real.
 - a) Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.

D. His Joy even in jail. He saw his jail term as a good thing...12-18

1. It was no accident, but God's providence. 16.
 - a) He trusted providence throughout his ministry,
2. It introduced the gospel to people who would not have heard it. 13
 - a) For the last 4-5 years Paul had spoken to leaders, kings, rulers, soldiers, in Caesarea and now in Rome.
 - b) The praetorian (imperial) guard, and many more.
3. It galvanized the believers' witness. 14-17
 - a) Some for good motives.
 - b) Some for bad motives (rivalry envy)
 - (1) Preaching Christ and criticizing Paul apparently furthered the personal agendas of some preachers.

V. Paul lives with a sense of joy even under stress. How so?

A. He found his identity not in his cultures, but in Christ and His family. 1-8

1. He was in both Hebrew and Greek/Roman cultures, both of which hated him. (Acts 26:17). To be hated and rejected by your culture, your family, your friends is excruciating for humans.
2. But in Christ his family is holy (saints) and his joy is found in sharing that grace with them.

B. He prioritized the progress of the gospel over his own life. 12-18a

1. Paul had a huge number of detractors for various reasons.
 - a) Judaizing Christians, Unbelieving Jews, pagan skeptics (Festus, Ac 26:24), and these angry preachers with personal agendas.
2. *No matter what we face in this life, there is opportunity to bear witness of Christ. Even in prison there is the witness to God's grace.*

C. He trusted the Lord's grace in his own and other people's lives. 1-2; 2Cor.5:19-21

1. The Grace of Christ He knows that God is creating saints in grace through faith in Christ. 1-2.
2. The gospel is the message of Christ's person and work in creating "holy ones" out of rank sinners, reconciling us to God in Christ.
3. What would it take to turn a self-righteous pharisee with high social standing into a man who *rejoiced* to be in prison, hated and misunderstood by most people, threatened with execution? Saul of Tarsus was the poster child for everything that is wrong about humanized religion. He was angry, self-righteous, legalistic, and proud of his goodness. What happened to him? *Jesus happened.* The Lord knocked Saul off his own righteousness and filled him with God's own goodness by the Spirit.
4. God is rescuing people from darkness and damnation daily. Knowing this and being a part of it brings a joy that is deeper than surface happiness.