

The 13th Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, September 8, 2019
“Joy Ride: A Study of Philippians ~ Servants, Saints & The Gospel of Joy”
Acts 16:6-40 & Philippians 1:1-2

Philippians is one of the most _____ books in the New Testament. One of the reasons people love Philippians so much is because it's the most _____ letter that Paul ever wrote.

3 REASONS TO STUDY PHILIPPIANS

- Although it's relatively _____—only 4 chapters—it covers many of the great _____ of the church.
- It provides good insight into the _____ side of the Christian faith and we learn how Paul dealt with his _____—both inside and outside the church.
- It's all about _____; and how we can find it even in the midst of personal _____.

Roman _____ weren't simply outposts of a civilization in unexplored parts of the world, but were little pockets of Roman _____, and their _____ in their Roman citizenship was the dominating characteristic.

“These men are Jews, and they are trying to teach and to introduce laws and customs which is not right for us to observe—for we are Romans.” (Acts 16:20-21)

“You are a colony of heaven.” (Philippians 3:20)

The Philippians must never forget that they were followers of Jesus, and therefore _____ of heaven first and foremost.

Paul's time in Philippi provides us with an extraordinary picture of the _____ of ancient life, and centres around three people:

All three levels of society are represented in these 3 people; and no chapter in the NT shows so well the _____ faith which Jesus brings to all men and women—regardless of _____ or state.

“There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28)

Acts 16 also tells us that Paul's work in Philippi ended _____ after a storm of _____ and illegal imprisonment.

4 REASONS FOR WRITING PHILIPPIANS

- **It's a letter of _____.**

“I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me...” (Philippians 4:10)

- **It's a letter of _____.**

“Meanwhile, I thought I should send Epaphroditus back to you... Welcome him with Christian love and with great joy, and give him the honour that people like him deserve. For he risked his life for the work of Christ, and he was at the point of death while doing for me what you couldn't do from far away.” (Phil. 2:25,29-30)

- **It's a letter of _____.**

The Christians in Philippi were experiencing the same kind of _____ that Paul experienced in Philippi. And so, he writes to remind them that they are sharing in his _____ and in _____ of the gospel; and to tell them not to _____ their adversaries, but to be confident in the _____ that they have in Christ.

“Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself. “ (Philippians 1:28)

- **It's an appeal for _____.**

In addition to external pressures, the Christians in Philippi were also experiencing internal _____.

Despite the _____ of both the writer of this letter and the recipients, joy _____ the Book of Philippians, so much so that it's been called the “Epistle of _____ Things,” and the “Epistle of _____.”

“Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the overseers and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:1-2)

TWO GROUPS OF PEOPLE

- _____.

Nowhere does he mention his apostolic _____, or his being chosen directly by God to _____ the gospel. Instead, he calls himself as a bondservant or _____ of the Lord Jesus. This is ironic considering Paul's long list of _____ and human accomplishments.

What he had considered to be _____ before God, he came to realize was actually _____ and negative. His former _____ righteousness, really unrighteousness; which he gladly let go of to gain the true righteousness that only comes through _____.

Slave = *doulos* = a person _____ by someone else and thus subservient or _____ on that person. When used in the NT to describe a believer's relationship to Christ, 'doulos' implies _____, determined, and _____ service to Christ and Him alone.

If we're overly concerned about what other people _____ or even about other believer's _____ and opinions, we'll invariably _____ from the gospel to some form of _____. However, _____ and obedience to the Lord and His Word will just as invariably keep us on a godly and _____ course.

How do you view yourself in relation to Christ?

Do you see yourself as a bond-servant—as slave—of the Lord Jesus?

Where do you focus your devotion and obedience?

• _____.

Saint = *qodesh* (Hebrew) = *hagios* (Greek) = someone who is _____.

"For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:2)

Only followers of Jesus can claim to be _____ their Lord, because they've been made spiritually _____ with Him.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:4-6)

Paul is very clear that being "in Christ Jesus," and therefore _____ to God, is our supreme source of _____ and ultimate _____.

Do you view yourself as a saint—as someone who has been called and set apart by God for His purposes? How do you live your life "in Christ?"

THE THEME OF PHILIPPIANS

The key overarching theme of the entire letter to the Philippians is _____.

Joy is very different from _____. Happiness is tied to our _____. Our culture is consumed by the _____ of happiness.

Joy is an _____; an approach to life, rather than a _____ to it. Running deeper and stronger, joy is a way of looking at, and relating to, life that's not _____ on chance or circumstances. It doesn't pretend that life is

great—it's a _____—a matter of attitude that stems from our _____ in God—in who He is—in the belief that no matter what's happening—God is present, in _____, and working. No matter what difficulty, pain, disappointment, failure, rejection, or other challenge one is facing, joy remains because of the eternal well-being established by God's _____ and salvation.

6 ELEMENTS OF A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF JOY

• **Joy is a _____ from God.**

"You will make known to me the path of life; in your presence is fullness of joy; in your right hand there are pleasures forever more." (Psalm 16:11)

• **God grants joy to those who _____ the gospel.**

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy for all people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

"These things I have spoke to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:11)

• **Joy is produced by the _____.**

"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17)

• **Joy is experienced most fully as believers receive and obey God's _____**

"Your words were found and I ate them, and your Words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by your name, O Lord God of hosts." (Jeremiah 15:16)

• **Joy is deepened through _____.**

"You also became imitators of us and of the Lord having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit." (1 Thess 1:6)

• **Joy is made complete when we set our hope on the _____ of heaven.**

"Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls." (1 Peter 1:8)

We can't _____ joy—we can't make it or fake it—no matter how many books we read. Joy isn't about technique—its all about _____. It comes from knowing that we're _____ by God; that we're forgiven—not because of what we do, but because of who God is. Joy comes from knowing that no matter what happens—no matter what the world takes from us—it can't take our _____ in God. Joy is based on our _____ in God's love; ability; and wisdom. We rejoice because we belong to Him and He is always _____ to His promises.

Are you walking in obedience to the Lord?

Are you experiencing this unceasing fountain of joy?