

Gospel Talk Bible Study
Choosing a Joyful Attitude
A Study of *Philippians*: "Love for the Saints"
Philippians 1:1-11

April 10, 2019

*"Then Jesus told His disciples, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."
(Matthew 16:24)*

I. To the Saints, Overseers and Deacons (vv.1-2)

- a. The letter is about Christ in our lives, our minds, as our goal, as our strength, and our joy through suffering.
- b. It was written about thirty years after Christ's ascension and about ten years after Paul first preached at Philippi.
- c. The epistle acknowledges a gift of money from the church at Philippi, brought to the apostle by Epaphroditus, a member (4:10-18).
- d. *Saints* means "set apart." *Overseers/bishops (episkopos)* refers to the pastors. *Deacons* were those who had been selected to serve the church and give attention to practical matters (Acts 6:1-7).

II. Love for the Saints and True Christian Fellowship (vv. 3-7)

- a. Christian *fellowship* is wonderful and astonishing. People who by nature have nothing in common find a common life in Christ.
- b. Paul's ministry in Philippi (Acts 16) involved Lydia, the slave girl and the jailer who had nothing in common until they came to Christ.
- c. The essence of Paul's love for them and their love for each other is described in verses 8-9.
 1. This description stands in direct contrast to the Corinthian or Galatian church.
- d. There is no perfect church, but there can be a church that strives for perfection. There should be a church that seeks to be *all things* Christ calls her to be. There can be a church that lives out love.
- e. Paul remembered them affectionately *...in all my remembrance of you*.
 1. The Philippian church experienced ten years of great fellowship. Every pastor should desire to say the same thing about the people they serve.
 2. One hateful unchecked member, one over-bearing leader can blemish the record of a church.
- f. Paul taught God's Word with loving tenderness. This endeared the church to him.
- g. It is always a blessing whenever the church leader can rejoice over the progress of the people.
- h. They were in fellowship with Paul because of *their partnership in the gospel*.
 1. They supported and encourage Paul in his preaching, because they saw the fruit from it (v.11).
 2. The Philippian saints were committed to the Gospel with no record of back-sliders or luke-warmness. The Philippians had fellowship in furthering the Gospel from the first day!
 3. Some run well for a time but fall short along the way. How many do you know that have dropped out of the race?
- i. Paul was confident in the *growing work of Christ* in them. The work of God is always ongoing.
 1. Why was Paul so confident? Because, he laid a good foundation for them to build on.
 2. They supported and joined him in defense of the Gospel. They continued to believe.
- j. *Our love* will abound more and more as long as we keep Christ and His Word in the center of all we do.
- k. Each day as a church family we have the opportunity to present evidence in our community that we have love for one another without compromise.