



Philippians

Living in the Joy of Knowing Christ!

The Joy of Knowing His Love!

Philippians 1:8-11

Message #2 of 16 – S986

Sermon given on February 27, 2022



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Joy of Knowing His Love!

Philippians 1:8-11

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Philippians 1**

- Today, we continue our series through the book of **Philippians – Living in the Joy of Knowing Christ!**

- It is almost the end of February – it is one of my favorite months
- I like the different kinds of weather we experience, especially rain
- February is the ‘love month’ to me
- Right in the middle is Valentine’s Day
- Many of the people who are special to me have birthdays in February – my daughter, my sister, my mother-in-law
- And the love of my life, Kelly, had a birthday a couple of days ago
- I came across a couple of quotes about love
- The first one reminded me of Kelly **Charles M. Schulz**

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.

- The second one was one of the great philosophers **Winnie the Pooh**

If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one day, so I never have to live without you.

- To love and be loved is one of the defining needs of humanity
- And that makes sense – We were made in the image of God **1 John 4:16**

And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

- Philosophers and scientists have attempted to understand love for thousands of years
- Countless poems, books, movies have been created on this topic
- There are different kinds of love – emotional, physical, familial
- Love is important
- From a Roman prison the Apostle Paul is going to talk to us about love
- And not about a ‘Love is blind!’ kind of love or the ‘Love at first sight!’ that we often see in the media

- The love Paul is going to talk to us about is the kind of love God expressed when He sent His Son to the world
- It is the kind of love Jesus showed when He died for our sins
- It is the love that the Holy Spirit poured into our hearts
- It is the love that changes us and makes us more like the perfect expression of love – the love that makes us like Jesus
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds to the love of God
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Joy of Knowing His Love!**
- Paul opens our text expressing his care for the church in Philippi
- **Philippians 1:8**
- Paul's affection for the Philippians found its source in Christ.
- Human affection can be fickle, easily offended, and based on emotions.
- Paul loved them with the love God had given him for them **Romans 5:5**

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

- Paul prayed for the Philippians because he loved them.
- Paul loved the Philippians because he prayed for them.
- If you have someone in your life that is hard to love – pray for them.
- The harder you pray for them the more you will love them.
- Paul then goes on to tell us what he prayed for the Philippians
- **Philippians 1:9**
- There was a mutual love between the church and Paul
- And they had expressed their love for Paul in many tangible ways
- But then Paul prays that their love would abound still more and more
- Why? How much is enough love? Jesus spoke on this **Matthew 22:36-40**

Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is

like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' **40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."**

- The kind of love that God is calling us to is selfless love
 - That is hard because we all have needs, wants, desires, dreams, wishes
 - How do we love selflessly when all those things are real **John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.**
 - Some interpret 'lay down one's life' to mean to die for someone
 - In the context of that verse, a more natural interpretation is 'set aside your life'
 - That means choosing to set aside your needs, wants, dreams, desires, and wishes and choosing to love someone
 - Paul expressed that thought to husbands **Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her...**
 - Guys, until you are loving your wife as much as Christ loves the church, you are not loving her enough
 - Paul gives us a clue to how your 'love may abound more and more'
 - 'in knowledge and all discernment'
 - It is a modern saying, 'Love is blind!'
 - True love cannot be ignorant but based in knowledge of the person who is to be loved. **Frank Sheed**
- "A virtuous man may be ignorant, but ignorance is not a virtue. It would be a strange God Who could be loved better by being known less. Love of God is not the same thing as the knowledge of God; love of God is immeasurably more important than knowledge of God; but if a man loves God knowing a little about Him, he should love God more from knowing more about Him: for every new thing known about God is a new reason for loving Him."**
- This is one of the reasons why we keep encouraging you to read your Bible
 - It is God's love letter to you and the rest of the world
 - The Bible was given to the world so that we would know God
 - And the better we know Him the better we are able to love Him
 - Some say, 'You can't love others until you love yourself!'
 - That is false – it is exceedingly rare that someone doesn't love themselves more than they love others
 - The key is to love God – the better you know God, the more you will love Him

- The more you love God, the more you will see His love within you and the more that love will flow out to others
- Paul adds to knowledge discernment
Discernment: the mental ability to understand and discriminate between relations; especially as acquired through experience.
- The word of God helps us to understand how to discriminate between right and wrong, good and evil, light and darkness
- The better we know God and learn to walk with Him in faith based upon a deeper understanding of God from what He has revealed about Himself in His Word, the better we will be able to love Him and others
- You need that knowledge and discernment for the next three things Paul prays for the Philippians
- First – **Seek the Excellent**
- **Philippians 1:10a**
- ‘approve the things that are excellent’
- Life is a continuous series of choices.
- The most basic is the choice between right and wrong or good and evil.
- As children of a good God, we should always choose the good and right.
- Sometimes in life the choice is between two good things.
- What Paul is praying for here is that they would be able to examine those choices and then choose what is excellent or best.
- As believers, we should never settle for good enough – seek God’s best – seek what is excellent
- Who defines what is excellent - God and His Word
- The second thing – **Be Sincere**
- **Philippians 1:10b**
- ‘be sincere’ has the sense of ‘purity’.
- The Greek word is made up of two words which mean ‘sun’ and ‘to judge’.
- This indicates that it is tested by the light of the sun. **R. Kent Hughes** “It denotes transparency of heart, a heart with pure and unmixed desires.”
- To be sincere is to act like the person you are

- Sincerity, by itself, is not enough – must have knowledge and understanding of God and His Word with sincerity
- Third – **Without Offense**
- **Philippians 1:10b**
- Live in such a way as to not cause others to stumble into sin. **1**

Corinthians 10:32-33

Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, 33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

- The prayer is that they would not stumble into sin, nor would they cause anyone to stumble into sin.
- If we are faithful to God, someone will be offended.
- If I am faithful to preach God’s Word, those who reject God’s Word will be offended.
- If I stand on the truth, like ‘A man cannot be a woman and a woman cannot be a man’ someone is going to be offended – rejection of truth
- But we can stand on the truth in a way that is offensive
- If I walk up to a man who has deluded himself into believing he is a woman, stick my finger in his face, and scream that his lifestyle is an abomination before God – it might be true, but it is offensive
- It does not reflect God’s love for that person – misrepresents God
- Everything that needs to be said and done can be in a way that reflects God’s true nature and character and love
- Doing what is right will be offensive to some – especially to those who reject God and His Word
- But doing what is offensive might hinder someone God wants to save from seeing Him and believing in Him for forgiveness of sins
- Paul finishes that verse telling them how long his prayer for them is meant to carry them
- ‘till the day of Christ’ – until you are standing face-to-face with Jesus
- The good work that God is doing in you is a work of love
- It is because He loves you and because He wants you to know Him better and better so that you can love Him more
- And the better you learn to love God, the more you will love others
- Paul ends this prayer with the object of our faith

- **Philippians 1:11**

- God saved you because He loves you
- He created you for His glory – to do good works
- Those are the things that reflect His nature, character, and love to the world
- The word ‘fruits’ has the idea of outcome
- Just as a tree produces fruit simply by being a tree, a Christian produces the fruits of righteousness simply by walking in righteousness by faith in God and obedience to His Word in the way God created them to live

- Paul tells us the character of that fruit **Galatians 5:22-23**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.

- And Jesus tells us that we can only bear that fruit through Him **John 15:5**

I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

- And then a few verses later He tells us the final result **John 15:8**

By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

- We were each created in the image of God to be the objects of His love and a reflection of His glory
- God is glorified when, in faith, we bear the fruits of righteousness
- When we are kind, or gentle, or humble, or compassionate as an expression of our faith in Christ – it glorifies God – people get a glimpse of the nature and love of God
- When we love the unlovable, forgive the unforgiveable, or give sacrificially, we are through our faith in Christ, showing the world God’s heart
- When we know joy even during our darkest times, we express to the rest of the world the hope we have in Christ
- There can be no greater joy in this life than knowing that God loves you
- Get to know Him better and better – know His love – know joy
- **Pray**