**No Matter What – A Study In The Book Of Philippians**

**~Philippians 1:1-11 – Observations Of A Life That Pleases God~**

**\*\* As we begin:**

* Paul started a church in Philippi **(Acts 16)**.
* It was located on a major road, the Egnatian Way, which connected the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire to Rome itself.
* In 42 B.C. it was given status and autonomy. People could own their own property and were exempt from paying poll and land taxes.
* The situation of the city led to arrogance. Retired Roman soldiers settled in Philippi.
* The church Paul started there was a mixture of races, culture, and social classes.

**\*\* Some information as we look at the book:**

* In Philippians, we find the word “joy” or “rejoicing” over 15x. This is important as we shall see.
* The letter was written in 61-62 A.D. by Paul and he is in prison. His crime – telling others about Jesus.
* Paul had gone through many difficulties in his life. See **2 Cor. 11:23-33**.
* The church at Philippi had undergone, and may still have been going through, persecution.
* **First**, Paul refers to himself and Timothy as “servants” **(vs. 1)**. A servant put others above themselves and gives up their will to follow another. It is a choice.
* Being a servant is not a demeaning word. We serve out of thankfulness.
* Paul calls the believers “saints” **(vs. 1)**. We are set apart for God. He also addresses church leaders.
* A second point is this: Paul was okay with Jesus as Lord of his life **(vs. 2)**.
* This letter shows us that circumstances should not dictate our spiritual commitment.
* We need an anchor in our life, a trustworthy source to hold on to. That is the Lord.

**Observations Of A Life That Pleases God**

**Being thankful can change our thinking – vss. 3-4**

* In **vs. 3** Paul tells the church that he is thankful for them. They brought him joy **(vs. 4)**.
* Practical: take time to think of a person or two who has been a positive influence and thank them. Drop a note. Pray for them.

**When we support each other, we further the kingdom – vs. 5**

* Paul says this church was in “partnership” with him. That includes encouraging and supporting one another. It means confronting sin. It is seen in not being rude and disrespectful. We are a team.
* The word “partnership” us the same word we get “fellowship” from (see **Acts 2:42**).

**God is not done with us until we are in His presence – vs. 6**

* First, God is doing a “good work” in our life. We are not puppets; we choose to follow Him. Paul was “sure” (confident, trust) that God was working in the lives of Christians. See **Rom. 8:29**.
* Second, this work God is doing will be completed when Christ returns. The word “completion” means “to bring to an end, perfect, complete.” God’s work will look different in each of us.

**Be prepared to explain what we believe – vs. 7**

* There are two key words in this verse. The first is “defense” (verbal defense) and the second word is “confirmation” (firm establishment). We need to know what we believe and why we believe it.
* It is about knowing the essentials of the Christian faith and why we hold to them.
* We need to know how to explain why we trust the Bible, Who God is. Stand against false theology.
* This verse shows us also that this church did not forget Paul. They stood with him when he was in prison while he defended and taught the Word. We need to do the same for those in tough situations.

**We need to be people marked by love, spiritual knowledge, and discernment – vss. 9-11**

* Love is an action word **(vs. 9)**. We care for others, we forgive, we serve and do so without expecting anything in return.
* We need the knowledge of the Word of God and the ability to discern truth from error, fake from fact.
* We need wisdom because some people will use us to further their agenda.
* We fulfill **Mt. 22:37-40** when we love God and others.
* Discernment has to do with making the right life choices. See **Heb. 5:14**.

**Our reputation does matter – vs. 10**

* The church at Philippi had a good reputation in a difficult city.
* The word “approve” means “to text, examine” something to make sure it is genuine.
* We will evaluate things by the Word of God, so that we know what is “excellent.” This word has the idea and is connected to discerning, testing or approving things, distinguishing good from evil.
* **Note:** We determine what is of greater value, what is best, as we discern.
* This will be seen in our lives. We will live “pure” (sincere, spotless) and “blameless” lives. Our moral life will be in line with truth. We will not cause others to stumble.

**We are to be the most trustworthy people around – vs. 11**

* **Vs. 11** is the result of **vss. 9-10**. The word “righteousness” has to do with how we live
* **Point:** As Christians, we should manage our lives in the right way. Pay our bills. Treat people the right way. Stand for truth. Be kind. The Holy Spirit helps us to live as we should. See **Rom. 14:17; Rom. 6:13**.