**Finding Grace**

**Partakers of Grace**

**1 Corinthians 12:12-13** - *For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

**1 Timothy 3:15** - *…I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.*

**Hebrews 4:16** - *Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

**Psalm 119:11** - *Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.*

Key introductory ideas about the book of Philippians

1. The apostle Paul had a marvelous relationship with this church, which began on his second missionary journey (cf. Acts 16).

**Acts 16:14-15** - *A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.*

**Acts 16:30** - *…and after he brought them out, he said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”*

2. The Philippian church made a generous contribution to help the needy Christians at Jerusalem and also faithfully supported Paul in his ongoing church planting efforts.

3. The church learned of Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome (AD 60-62), and they were concerned for his health and well-being. They took a special offering for his care and sent it with a man from the church named Epaphroditus. While on the journey, Epaphroditus became gravely ill.

4. During this time, Paul wrote four “prison epistles:”, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon.

5. Paul’s purpose in writing to the Philippians was five-fold (MacArthur Study Bible):

a. To express in writing his thanks for the Philippians’ financial gift (4:10-18)

b. To explain why he was sending Epaphroditus back to them so they would not think his service to Paul had been unsatisfactory (2:25-26)

c. To inform them about his circumstances in Rome (1:12-26)

d. To exhort them to unity (2:1, 2; 4:2)

e. To warn them against false teachers (3:1-4:1)

4 ways God’s grace impacts the church of Jesus Christ

**I. Grace Levels the Playing Field**

**Philippians 1:2** - …*peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

A. Because of our common stand in Christ

**v. 1** – …*the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi…*

Rock of Ages (verse 3)

Nothing in my hands I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling; Naked, come to Thee for dress, Helpless, look to Thee for grace: Foul, I to the fountain fly, Wash me, Savior, or I die.

B. Because of the gracious relationship between genders

**Galatians 3:28** - *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

C. By drawing different ethnic groups together

**2 Corinthians 8:1-5** - *Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.*

D. Between leaders and other members of the church

**Philippians 1:1** - *Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus…*

E. Resulting in peace, harmony, and unity in the body

**Philippians 1:2** - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**II. Grace Makes Us Thankful for One Another**

A. As we pray for one another

1. with thanksgiving

**Philippians 1:3** - *I thank my God in all my remembrance of you…*

2. always

**v. 4** – *always…*

3. with joy

**Philippians 1:4** - *…always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all…*

**Philippians 1:5** - *…in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.*

B. Because participating in the gospel of Jesus Christ is our highest treasure

C. In a way that generates relational depth

**Philippians 1:7** - *For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart…*

**Philippians 1:8** - *For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.*

**III. Grace Gives Us a Common and Compelling Purpose**

**Philippians 1:5** - …*in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.*

**Philippians 1:7** - *…since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.*

A. A willingness to sacrifice and suffer together

**Philippians 1:29-30** - *For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.*

B. An ability to both proclaim and defend the gospel

**Philippians 1:7** - *…since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.*

C. A desire to participate financially

**Philippians 4:15-16** - *You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.*

**IV. Grace Allows us to Live with Joyful Anticipation**

A. That God will continue His work among us

**Philippians 1:6** - *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

B. Our love can abound still more

**Philippians 1:9** - …*that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment…*

C. That our lives can be characterized by growing “sincerity”

**Philippians 1:10** - …*so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ…*

**Matthew 6:19-21** - *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*