

Captured for Christ

Philippians 1:1-2

Series: Joy and Gratitude in Christ

1. Introduction

- a. The Philippian church was the first church Paul founded in Europe.
- b. The major themes in the book of Philippians are Joy and Gratitude.
- c. The epistle's opening express Paul's first point:
 - i. The heart of joy is selflessly serving King Jesus and others for his sake.
 - ii. It is in mindful service to Christ and to others that we can most emulate the heart of God most completely.

2. Verse 1 – Servanthood

- a. We are immediately struck with the opening to this letter.
 - i. This opening is quite unique in the New Testament.
- b. Only in Philippians does Paul open an epistle by associating a colleague (Timothy) with himself and then linking their names with a shared title, “slaves of Christ Jesus.”
 - i. Why? It is because Paul wants to dramatize the counterintuitive truth that these men bear God's authority because Christ has captivated them as his slaves.
- c. He identifies himself and Timothy as bond-servants.
 - i. The word in the Greek—*doulos*—is a person owned by someone else and thus subservient to and dependent on that person. Paul's used it of himself at the beginning of three of his epistles (Romans 1, Philippians 1, and Titus 1). In each case, the word precedes the word for apostle.
 - ii. When used in the New Testament of a believer's relationship to Jesus Christ, *doulos* describes willing, determined, and devoted service. It reflects the attitude of an Old Testament slave who refused the opportunity for freedom and voluntarily resubmitted himself to his master for life.
 - iii. Paul use of the term is not negative but positive because it is in bond service to Christ that a man can truly be free.
 1. It is this kind of service that is required of every believer:
 2. **Acts 20:24** But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and

the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

- iv. Remember, he is imprisoned by Rome because he is in service to Christ as a slave.
- v. **Servants of Christ** – Christ captivates anyone whom he saves. However, it is in this captivity that men learn what it is to be free.
 - 1. Every man will serve someone or something.
 - 2. Every master but Jesu will exploit and disappoint you in the end.
 - 3. Every master will abuse and discard us but Christ Jesus elevates and preserves us. It is liberating to be in King Jesus.
- vi. The tile of slave was used of Moses, Joshua, and David.
- d. To all the saints **in Christ Jesus** –
 - i. Paul addresses his letter to all the saints in Christ Jesus.
 - ii. The word for saint is – *qodesh* – refers to someone who is set apart; specifically believers, who are set apart by God for Himself. This word is often translated “holy.”
 - iii. Scripture makes it clear that all the redeemed are saints, set apart from sin to God.
 - 1. **Acts 9:13 & 15** But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem... 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.
 - iv. All believers are saints, not because they are themselves righteous, but because they are in their Lord, Christ Jesus.
 - v. Only Christians can claim to be in their Lord, because they have been made spiritually one with Him.
 - vi. In Paul’s letters, the phrase “in Christ Jesus” occurs fifty times, “in Christ” twenty-nine times, and “in the Lord” forty-five times. Being in Christ Jesus and therefore acceptable to God is the believer’s supreme source of Joy.
 - vii. To all the saints – predominantly a gentile church
 - viii. Amazingly – the Bible calls people who are not pure or free of defiling sin holy and saints.
 - 1. It is “in Christ Jesus” that we, sinful people, can be saints. Christ – God – Sanctifies us in relationship.

- e. Overseers and deacons –
 - i. Overseer – elder, bishop, pastor
 - ii. Deacon – servant – same qualifications except for the ability to teach
 - iii. The small word “with” – The overseers and deacons not as dominating but as co-laboring together for one purpose.
3. Verse 2 – Grace and Peace
- a. Grace – saving, eternal grace – is granted to penitent, believing sinners as the supreme gift of God.
 - b. Peace is its greatest blessing.
 - i. Peace is the reconciling reality that secures our place in God’s heart. Nothing but God’s grace could give us peace with God. Our insult to his honor created a chasm of antagonism between us and our Creator, and this terrible divide will not disappear just by our pretending it isn’t there.
 - ii. The wonder of the gospel is that, though we must admit that we offended the holy God, the God whose honor we violated has come to absorb the pain that should be ours through grace. Therefore we can have peace with God.
 - iii. The price for peace with God was the death of God the Son
 - iv. Grace, therefore, always precedes peace.
 - c. The source of both is God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - i. Grace and Peace are offered, therefore, to those who approach God as “Father” and bow to Jesus Christ as “Lord”
4. Benediction:
- a. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, (20) for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.