

To the Saints at Philippi

Philippians 1:1-11 / Pastor Sean Harris / Berean Baptist Church

Please take your Bibles and turn to Philippians 1.

Please bring your Bibles to church. I'm talking about this thing right here. Please carry this to church. If you don't have a Bible, buy one. I was in a hospital visit with Carl. Carl, are you here this morning yet? They just had a baby. Carl reminded me that the reason he chose Berean many years ago was because he was in the parking lot and noticed that people were carrying Bibles into the building. Your phone is not an acceptable substitute. If you need the money for a Bible, see David. He will spot you the money. David's right here. I said spot. We ain't giving them away. Buy it. On a very serious note, get a Bible.

Philippians 1. Look at this letter. Just look down at it. My Bible is two half pages.

I'm going to show you this map before we read our text. Here's Philippi (modern day). Here's Italy. I'm on the screen. My right. Your left. Here's Greece, Albania, and Macedonia. This region here. Here's Philippi right here. Now I'm going to show you this map. In red—it's a little bit difficult to see. Red is never a good color to use, but that's what they had on this map. It's Via Egnatia. It's a Roman roadway way. It's the equivalent of I-95. Philippi is located right here.

Now Paul's over here. Again, I'm on my right, your left. He's over here in Rome. We ended Acts. He's in house arrest. What we're reading—grasp this with me now this morning—we're reading in English a translation of a letter that Paul sent that traveled from way over here in Rome, down here, across the Adriatic Sea, on this road to a group of believers in Philippi. Real Paul writing a real letter on material that's preserved, recopied, recopied, recopied, and translated into English. We're getting ready to read what Paul wrote them 2,000 years ago, preserved for our edification today. It spoke to them 2,000 years ago. From that point forward, this small letter has been speaking to believers ever since.

Now let's read the Word of God together: "Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Php 1:1). *Overseers* is the literal translation of the word, bishop.

To the overseers, the elders, the pastors (those who shepherd the congregation), the servants, the deacons, and then the saints: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy" (Php 1:2-4). What are you thanking them for? "For your fellowship [or partnership] in the gospel from the first day until now" (Php 1:5). The *first day* is referring to the day that Paul started this church in Philippi.

Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:6-11)

Lord, do a work in this your church this morning. May every young person be incredibly attentive. May no phones be a distraction. May we all focus on the Word of God in our lap. And may we see your glory in the salvation that's described in this text. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Relationship Between Paul and Timothy

This church at Philippi on our map was started when Paul got the Macedonian call. Remember when he was told, "Go to Macedonia." The church at Philippi is the first church planted in modern-day Europe. You will recall that Lydia, a seller of purple, was one of the very first converts. She had quite the financial resources, so she began supporting Paul in this endeavor. You'll remember that Paul got locked up in a prison, the prison doors rocked, and nobody escaped. The Philippian jailer said, "What must I do to be saved?" (Ac 16:30). The answer was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household" (Ac 16:31). That's the embryonic beginning of the church at Philippi. No doubt Paul visited them again after his second missionary journey, and had an impact on them. Now through a letter, he's continuing to have impact.

What we want to do is work our way through all four chapters, not this morning, but Sunday after Sunday, diligently looking at everything that God inspired the Holy Spirit to write through Paul. There are some amazing passages. Philippians 2 is going to hold this amazing description of Jesus Christ who leaves the glories of heaven, comes down in human form, and will ascend back up and receive the exaltation. We're going to just camp out there for at least a couple of weeks because it is so doctrinally informative for us. It will teach us much.

For now, let's get started with these words, Paul and Timothy (the simple description, Paul and Timothy, in verse number one). Let's stop for a minute and recognize the significance of this. First of all, they're not peers. They are not peers. Paul is definitely the older man. He's had an impact on Timothy. There's a generation between them. What we're getting here is the communication that "I'm leaving." Paul knows he's departing, and he's passing the mantle to Timothy. He can think of no better way to set Timothy up for success than to communicate—

Gramps got all the candy now. We're good to go. The candy exchange has occurred. Now we're ready to continue preaching. Very good. I'm sorry. I notice distractions. I've got this crazy expectation that you pay attention to preaching. I don't know where I got that from, but that's what my expectation is.

Paul and Timothy (older Paul and younger Timothy), have a mentoring relationship. It reminds us today that we are in the business of mentoring, that the Christian church needs to be building these mentoring relationships. All the young moms in here, every one of you should be looking for an older mom to build a relationship with. All the older moms in this room—

I'm not in either camp right now. I'm not the older. I'm not the younger. We're right in the middle right now. Why are we laughing, Darren? Why are you laughing? Let's stay focused. We're going to Harris Teeter. I'm at Harris Teeter. Let's get this out of the way. We're asked about the senior citizen discount, Adam, at Harris Teeter. I said very emphatically, "Do I look like a senior citizen?" There was a mixed bag of answers across the board. So I feel like it's a little bit young.

In any case—let's set that aside—are you impacting anybody in the younger generation? Are you being impacted by anybody in the older generation? Are you building relationships? Do you have a Paul in your life? Do you have a Timothy in your life? Are you doing anything with the older generation or the younger generation?

You may do it through sports. Sports is an incredible vehicle to build relationships. A soccer ball, basketball, football, a frisbee, cross country—whatever you want. It's not about that. It's about our relationship-building event in which Paul is impacting Timothy. Timothy is being impacted by Paul. He's seizing it all. Timothy's setting the conditions to impact the next generation. These words, "Paul and Timothy to the saints at Philippi," is a reminder that Paul is not going to be here forever. He's not an eternal apostle. The next generation has to pick up the mantle and carry it forward.

That's the impact here with these simple descriptions of Paul and Timothy. Who are you mentoring? Who is mentoring you? Who's teaching you? Who's impacting you? Younger moms, find the older moms. Older moms, when you get a sense to mentor a younger mom, seize it. Don't be too busy to have a conversation. Get to know that person. Impact them. Find out what's going on in their lives. You've been there. You've been through that.

In the ICU, I remember talking to Lauren when her little infant was born prematurely. They were there early, and it was such a struggle. I said, "Understand that you're going through this so that when it happens to another member of the body of Christ, you'll be there to walk them through the same thing. And because you've been through it and you walked those days, you can impact somebody else."

That's what this is all about, this relationship between Paul and Timothy.

Grace and Peace To Servants and Saints

Look at the next description we get here. You're not an apostle. Instead, it's a plural reference to *doulos*. It's "we are slaves, servants, or bondservants to Jesus Christ." He, by implication from the word "servant," is my master. He's my master. I am the servant.

Let me ask you very emphatically if anyone looked at your life in the last five days at work, would they think you were a servant of Jesus Christ? The way you carry yourself, the way you are, the what you speak, the language you use, the way you interact with other people—would anyone notice anything different about the way you are versus anyone else on the assembly line? Or are you so much like everybody else that we can't tell the difference?

Paul and Timothy are being described as slaves to Jesus Christ. You bought me. You redeemed me. You delivered me from hell, and for that, I am incredibly thankful. You are my master. You're my master.

We talked about this in Sunday school for just a moment of time, this idea of a kingdom. In this kingdom, we are the citizens. All the kingdom members submit to Jesus Christ as their King. This is the same type of description. Then, notice "to all the saints." Not St. Teresa, not Saint Elizabeth, but all the saints. All of them. If you are born again this morning, converted, have been redeemed, purchased with a price, are a born-again believer, changed by the power of the gospel, you are a saint. You don't have to wait until you're dead and have an entire research project done to prove you had a couple of miracles. You have been made a saint by the Lord Jesus Christ.

You are, according to the Word, literally a holy one. In other words, in the city of Fayetteville, there are a whole bunch of holy ones running around (or little Jesuses). They are set apart. They are different. They have been made holy by the blood of Jesus Christ. By implication, they are expected to live a holy life.

And lest you think that this is too strong of an idea, pause for just a moment with me. Let's run over to Hebrews 12:14. Find Hebrews very quickly in your bible. It's before James. It's after the Pauline epistles. This is a verse worthy of your attention.

By the way, would you guys mind joining me for just a moment in wishing Sister Elizabeth Jones, who's sitting right here, happy birthday. She celebrates ninety-two years of life. That's amazing. Happy birthday. She qualifies for the senior citizen discounts. She gets it every time. They don't even ask her at Harris Teeter. It's a wonderful thing.

Please look at Hebrews 12:14. That gave you a moment to find it. "Peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord" (Heb 12:14). If it seems like we put too much emphasis on personal holiness in this church, the only reason we put such an emphasis on it is because you can't see the Lord without it.

He says, "To [the holy ones] in Christ Jesus" (Php 1:1). And they are located where? "In Philippi." We are located at Fayetteville. They are located at Philippi.

Who is he also issuing a greeting to? To the overseers. Who else? To the deacons. In the church at Philippi, there is a group of overseers. They are supported by a group of deacons. Then, there is the entire congregation, all collectively referred to as saints. Let me draw to your attention that there are no saints outside of that.

See, this quasi-group of Christians who have no overseers, no deacons doesn't exist in the New Testament. They don't recognize this group. They're never addressed. These are the folks who don't go to any local assembly. These are folks who call themselves Christians, and they're fed by the Internet. They have their favorite Internet preachers. They have no relationship with local overseers. They don't know a single deacon. They are not a member of

a local congregation. He doesn't know about this group. He can imagine that. If you're a believer, you're part of a local congregation. He either can't fathom the idea of existing through the Internet world. No, you're plugged in. You have an overseer. You have an overseer that knows you, and you know the overseer. You know the deacons. You're part of the group called the saints.

Where do you worship? Whenever the believers assemble in Philippi, you're there. You're part of that local assembly. We are losing the emphasis on local church attendance, local church membership, and the local body of Christ. We prayed this morning for Jack who is leaving to go to Georgia to start college. He's one of our seniors. Hey, you've got to plug in right away. You've got to find a local church. *Well, I listen to Pastor Sean on the Internet.* No, you've got to go find a pastor in Georgia and connect to a local church.

Let me tell you something. The Internet preacher's not marrying you. The Internet preacher's not—he may or may not. I guess you could get them if you give enough money. Maybe you could bribe him, but in most cases, he's not going to come visit you in the hospital. He doesn't know who you are. He doesn't connect with you on a personal basis. He doesn't recognize your face and know who you are and care about you.

Paul knows these people in Philippi. He knows them. He knows them by name. He impacted their lives in a personal way. So he writes to the saints, the deacons, and the overseers. Let's see what he says to them.

"Grace" (Php 1:2). Paul can think of nothing better than to wish that God's grace would be shed abroad in their lives. The very first thing that he says is, "May the grace be unto you. May you be a recipient of God's grace. May you experience more of God's grace."

Grace is so nebulous that way we almost don't even think about it and its significance. Webster defines it as this unmerited divine assistance that brings about our regeneration and then our sanctification. Now remember sanctification—that's a high speed word right there—is the progressive work of God working in you to make you more like Jesus. Let's break it down like that. God the Holy Spirit is inside you. God is working in your life to chip away at all the sin, all the imperfections, and conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. That's the end state. That's the end game.

Now we know this, in particular, from verse six. Let me look at my Bible real quick. I'm back in Philippians 1:6. Paul says, "[I am] confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Php 1:6). Let's unpack that in relation to this idea of sanctification because Paul said, "I'm praying that you become a recipient of more grace, grace unto you."

I'm already saved. I've got grace be saved. No, it's more than just grace to be saved. It's more than that because I'm not there yet. I haven't arrived. God's still working on me. There used to be a song like that. There is a song like that: *To make me what I ought to be.* That's sanctification right there. Boys and girls when they sing that song, they're singing about God's ongoing work in them.

Someone said, "I want to know that I'm saved."

Is God working in your life? Is God working on you?

I want to know that I'm saved. How can I get assurance of my salvation? How can I get assurance? How can I know for sure?

Has he begun a good work on you? "Being [ver]y confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will [perform] it"—when?—"until the day of Jesus Christ" (Php 1:6). When did the good work begin? It began on the day that I was saved. And when will that good work end? It will end on the day in which I appear before Jesus Christ at the judgment seat of Christ. Between that day and this day, there is an ongoing work of God in my life. says that grace is God's divine assistance to conforming to the image of Jesus Christ. Every day I'm progressively being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. So he prays, "Grace from God to you."

Small business owners, do you need God's grace on your small business? Platoon leaders, company commanders, battalion commanders, do you need God's grace in your life? Absolutely. I make a lot of decisions. I deal with people's lives all the time. I need wisdom. I need grace. I need favor from God. I need discernment from God. Paul is praying that you

receive that. He's praying that virtue comes from God to assist you in your life.

Then, he can pray for peace that you can have peace with God. You were at enmity with God. You do realize that, right? You were at enmity with God. Before you there was a hostility between you and God. God was hostile to your sin. He wasn't okay with your sin. It wasn't like, "Oh, I understand." No, there was an open hostility between you and God. Christ steps in and mitigates the hostility through his shed blood. Suddenly, the war is over, and you're at peace with God.

Thankful For More Than Food

Three and four. Good stuff.

"I thank my God upon every remembrance" (Php 1:3). Let's just stop right now, be real upfront, and say unequivocally, nobody on the planet should be more thankful than Christians. Now let's stop. That's not up for debate. That's not like a Methodist thing, a Presbyterian thing, or Baptist. *We don't really agree with you on that.* No. Wait a minute. We've been saved. We've been recipients of God's grace. When you've been a recipient of God's grace, we are to breathe thankfulness.

It is routine for us. *Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you. That was awesome. Thanks. Thank you so much. I appreciate that. That was amazing. I didn't know you're going to help me. Thank you very much.* It's like overboard.

We just can't get over it. Our children, our young people, us, all of us old people in the room, all of us ought to be thankful. *Thank you for serving me today. Thank you again that for me. Thank you. That was awesome. Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.* Is that you?

I want to ask this question because Paul is thanking God for people. "Upon every remembrance of you" (Php 1:3). When was the last time you thanked God for something and someone beyond food? *Thank you for the food. Thank you for the food. Thank you for the food. Thank you for the food. Thank you for the food, Lord. Thank you for the food you've given us.* I believe God thinks, *Food? I've given you so much beyond cheeseburgers and French fries. Could we grow beyond food?* Think about the last seven days and what you've expressed thanksgiving to God for beyond food. When was the last time you thanked God for a person?

You thank God for people because Paul says, "I thank God every time I remember you. I thank God everyday. I'm thinking about Lydia and the work she's done. I'm thinking about that Philippian jailer, Lord. I just want to thank you, God, for bringing them into my life." When was the last time you thanked God for a person, human beings who had an impact in your life?

Anytime I'm praying, he says, "I'm able to make my petitions with great joy over you as God brings you to my remembrance. I just issue a statement of 'Lord, thank you for bringing so-and-so in my life.'"

I thank God beyond measure for our granddaughter who brings joy into my life, an absolute gift. It's a person. It's a human being. Much more than a cheeseburger (bacon cheeseburger), human beings. I thank God for mentors, twenty years in an army career, people that impacted my life. I thank God for Mike Hubbard. We had over a decade of a relationship, and God brought him into my life when I was a first sergeant. He was a battery commander. Because we were believers, we were partakers of the grace of God together. God instantly knit our hearts together, and we've had a relationship ever since. I'm going to push the envelope. There are occasions where I even thank God for Darren Hawk. It is not as frequently as everybody else, but it does happen. The point is, who do you thank God for?

By the way, let's push the envelope just a little bit more this morning. If you're having struggles with a brother in Christ or a sister in Christ, and you begin to pray for them, it'll change. That's exactly right, sister. It'll change. It will start changing because it's really hard to be at enmity with somebody that you're thanking God for. *Lord, I just want to let you know I'm praying for so-and-so.* Pretty soon, God will begin to knit your heart together with somebody. It'll start in a prayer closet. When was the last time you thanked God for something or someone beyond food?

Our Partnership In the Gospel

Why is Paul thanking God so much for these Philippians? He tells us in verse five. Your King James Bible has the word "fellowship" (Php 1:5). *Partnership* is even a better word. "For your [partnership] in the gospel from the first day until now."

Think about what we're reading there in verse five. Let's not run over this. Paul was saying that the Philippian saints took an interest in his ministry from the first day until even now in the imprisonment. When others had abandoned him, they had not. When others had forgotten about him, they had not. When others decided he doesn't need their money, they had not. How do we know that money's being in reference here? Let's turn over to Philippians 4:15 where Paul will say, "Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church [communicated] with me concerning giving and receiving [except] you" (Php 4:15). What a statement. Don't miss that. Of all the churches that Paul had planted, of all the lives that he had impacted, of all the people that he touched, only the church at Philippi had provided financial support. So "fellowship" in verse five is thanking God "for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" (Php 1:5).

So I want to ask you this morning, are you a partner with us? Half of you are not. Hear me well. Half of you give more money to Redbox than you do Berean Baptist Church. Now I fully realize there are some folks who can't, and I got that. I know that there are some folks in our congregation who are financially strapped. I understand that. I got it. But not everybody.

Paul says, "I thank God that you partnered with me in the advancement of the gospel." Tomorrow morning, we believe that we will open the first day of school with well over 500 students, perhaps as many as 520. Those students will be in ages three to twelfth grade (16-17 year olds). Do you know that they are going to be impacted with the gospel whether they like it or not five days a week in every possible forum?

I'll get the privilege next week, the week of the 25th—whether that's next week or the following, I can't remember—to go down to Get Acquainted Days. We're going to bring a hundred of the high school kids down to Camp Anchorage, and we are going to preach the fire out of the gospel. They are going to be introduced to the gospel front ways, sideways, upside down, left side, right side. We are going to infuse gospel with all our might by the power of the Holy Spirit into the very fiber of their being. Five preaching services all focused on gospel-centered application into their lives.

When you give to this ministry, when you say I'll be a partner, what you're saying is, I believe in the gospel ministry of Berean Baptist Church. Let me be even clearer with you. If you think, *I'm not really sure they know how to steward my money. I'm not really sure they preach the gospel that seriously around there.* Please hear me well. Go find another church. I wouldn't attend church that I didn't believe was preaching the gospel. I wouldn't attend a church that I couldn't partner with. I wouldn't attend this church and send my money somewhere else.

He's says, "You're a partner." Let me let me give it to you another way. (We're talking about partnership.) Let me give you another idea. At the present time, we're probably going to have to cap the number of people that can participate in Awana on Wednesday night. You say, "Why would you cap anything?" You have to cap it according to the workers. You can't put one adult in a room for fifty kids. That's dangerous. That's unsafe. So at the current number of volunteers offer Wednesday nights, we're probably going to have the cap it. In other words, nineteen, twenty-one, and that's it. If you come after the twenty-one, I'm sorry. You can't

participate tonight. Come earlier next week. The reason we're going to have to cap it is because we don't have enough partners.

Let me ask you, do you think that children learn the gospel in Awana? Yeah, absolutely. They are introduced to the gospel sideways, upside down, and front ways. They're introduced to Scripture. They're introduced to the New Testament. They are taught the Gospel in Awana. So you could be a partner in the advancement of the gospel through Awana. Or you could continue to be the most selfish person on the planet and do nothing.

I know that sounds harsh, but do you live for yourself or do you live for others? Every time we refuse to give of our time, talent, or finances, we are saying, "Actually, I'm the most important person on the planet." But when we step out in faith and we give, we partner, we serve, we're saying there's something more important than me. That's what the church in Philippi said about Paul. *We believe in your gospel ministry and we're going to keep on supporting you. We support you from the beginning, and we're going to continue supporting you.*

Can I tell you that partners receive a reward both now and eternity? "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Lk 6:38).

I can testify that for 28 years of marriage and giving, God has blessed Pam and I. Is there anyone else who can testify like that? Is there anyone else can say, "We've given to God and God has just been so generous to us"? We've seen God work over and over and over again. God works through promotion. God works to take care of us.

I want to give you an example. Let me preface this very clearly. You guys are amazing to Pam and I. You take care of us really well. You guys are generous and we are well taken care of. One of you last week put in the offering a little bit of cash and said, "We want you guys to go out to lunch." Pam and I were sitting at dinner together last night and we just said goodbye to Erica and Autumn. We're sitting down, and I told Pam, "You're not going to believe this, but somebody put a little bit of cash in our envelope and told us to go out to lunch with it." And she started crying. I said, "What are you crying about?" And she said, "Do you know that I prayed that someone would show a little bit—"

I'm going to tell you right now. God is good. God is good. You can't out give God. I'm not telling you this to try to encourage you to give us any more because we're going to give it away if you do. I'm trying to show you how the prayers impact in an amazing way. It starts with faithfulness. You can't out give God. You believe in a ministry, what a ministry is doing, and what their effort is going towards. You believe that this place is going to be a gospel preaching station as long as I'm alive and have any impact in it. So you say, "I want a partner with that effort to get the gospel forward."

I'll give you another example. Rahm [???] is coming tonight. Rahm [???] is a church planter in Brazil. He's on his fifth church. Four of them are still functioning entities. They don't start a church and it fails, start another and it fails. No, they're still preaching the gospel. He's on his fifth right now. We support him every single month. If you support this church, you are partnering with a gospel-preaching entity in Brazil. You're partnering on Wednesday night. You're partnering with Berean Baptist Academy. You're partnering with one in Brazil. If you were here last Sunday night, you heard another one in North Africa. You've got partners all over the world if you give to this ministry. We're doing the exact same thing.

When you think, *I can't afford to give*, let me be clear. You can't afford not to give. You say, "You don't know my finances." Start with anything. Just start with anything. Just start. *In faith, I'm going to give this \$5 to the kingdom of God. In faith, I'm going to give this \$10. I'm just going to step out in faith and believe that God is able.* And it starts that way.

He says, "Sell your possessions." Jesus said, "Give to the needy. Provide yourselves money bags"—where?—"treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Mt 15:20). You are not going to say, "Man, I wish I got that purse," at the judgment seat of Christ. "I wish those brightened shoes—I can't believe I missed that purse." You're not. At the judgment seat of Christ, we are all going to say, what more could we have done? Us, all. Us, all.

Don't act like for a moment that I'm sitting up here as some self-righteous guy that's

got this fixed. I see good looking cars like you do. I gawk at Mercedes and BMWs just like you do. I think about those things just like you do. We all desire that. (Sorry, all but Jennifer Jefferson.) Pick whatever you want. We all have eyes towards nice things. Everyone in this room does. All of us. But it's about your priorities. Get your giving done first. Make God priority first. Then, work with what God gives you. But get that as a priority in your life right off the bat. *This is what we're going to do. This is what we're going to give. We believe in this. We believe in it, and we're going to give.*

The Deep Affection of Brotherly Love

I'm sure of this: "[God] who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Php 1:6). Our salvation begins and ends with God. I say to you this morning, the greater degree to which we see the Spirit of the Lord working in the life of a person gives us greater confidence in the authenticity of their salvation. Why? Because he who began a good work in you will perform that. *Pastor Sean, how can I get assurance of my salvation? Did you pray to ask Jesus in your heart? I did.* Okay, you're good to go. No, that is unbiblical assurance of salvation. What then would be biblical assurance of salvation? Is God working in your life? Is God working in your life? I can't answer that for you just like you can't answer for me. I can see what I think God looks like working in your life, but in the end, only you know. Is God working in your life? Eternal security of the believer rests with the sovereign will of God from beginning to end.

Notice verse seven. Notice what he says: "I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of my grace" (Php 1:7). I want you to grab this idea: "I have you in my heart." Look at verse eight: "For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels," or the affections or my inner being (Php 1:8). Look at what Paul is describing here. He's saying that in the body of Christ there is this amazing affection one for another, that we love each other. There's a brotherly affection in the body of Christ. "I have you in my heart."

Would you turn over to 2 Peter for a moment please? I want to draw a parallel. I have five minutes with you left, and I want to use all five minutes of them. Second Peter 1. I want to make one final point, and then I want to draw this to an end. The reason we're going over here is because of this idea of brotherly affection that I'm drawing from Paul. Paul says, "I have you in my heart. I have an affection for you." I want to see if Peter confirms the same idea. That's why we're moving to 2 Peter.

In verse five, I want you to see what Peter tells me. Peter says in verse five, "Giving all diligence [or make an effort], add to your faith" (2Pe 1:5). I want you see it in your own Bible. I've got this salvific faith. I can't touch it, but it's there (my saving faith in Jesus Christ). Now Peter says, "Add to your faith virtue," or moral excellence. (I'm transitioning to verse six.) "To [moral excellence, I want you to add] knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control [steadfast endurance (that's the King James word *patience*), to [steadfast endurance, I want you add] godliness, to godliness, [add some] brotherly kindness," or some brotherly affection (2Pe 1:5-7). After that, he tells him to add charity.

So Paul and Peter both distinguish between unconditional love we have for humanity and the deeper bond that we have as brothers and sisters in Christ. Two different ideas. The one is a general unconditional love for everybody. That's the last thing he calls charity. But before that is the bond that Adam and I have. Do you know why? Because we're brothers and sisters in Christ. Paul says, "I have you in my heart. I know who you are. I care about you."

If you don't have such affection, ask yourself why. Why do you think it is, Bob, that we put an emphasis around here on knowing names? David, how in the world can you have a brotherly affection for somebody if you don't even know their name? You've heard me rail against the megachurch. One of the reasons I rail against the churches because I don't believe it provides this brotherly affection. You usher in. You sit in. It looks just like this. We all stare forward. When the entertainment's over, we all exit.

A couple of weeks ago, I asked you put in your bulletin a name of someone you met.

How in the world can you develop brotherly affection if you don't know anyone? How can you have a sister-brotherly affection? How can we have these mentoring relationships around here? Do you know how they work? They work through developing friendships, communication, talking, and exchanging ideas. *How was your week? What's going on in your life? How can I pray for you?* Over time, a greater degree to which we build these relationships is the greater degree to which I have you in my heart.

We have this ongoing rivalry, Darren and I, but underneath that is an incredible brotherly affection that bonds us together. I can't imagine doing this thing called church and life without Darren, and I don't know if he'd say the same thing. On a very serious note, we care about each other. I hold you in my heart. You can't hold people in your heart that you don't even know. You care about them. You get to know them. What do they do for a living? Where do they live? What do they like? What do they not like? What are their struggles?

We're not in a theater. It's called the body of Christ. We love each other. We care about each other. We come early to church. We stay afterwards. We come to fellowship events. We do all that because we're trying to achieve what he describes here which is this: "I have you in my heart" (Php 1:7). I have a deep inner affection for you. I care about you.

Who do you care about in this church? *I don't really know anybody.* That's the problem. That's the entire problem. *How can I fix that?* You serve together in Awana on Wednesday nights and you'll start getting to know somebody. Teach a Sunday school class with somebody. Partner with somebody in Sunday school. You'll start getting to know somebody. Serve in Power Hour. You'll start getting to know somebody. Come on Wednesday night and do Awana, and you'll start getting to know somebody. You can't do it with one hour a week. It doesn't work. It simply doesn't work. That's not the model that we have.

Instead, we have this deep affection one for another that guides us in our thinking, impacts how we live, and we are doing exactly what Peter told us to. We're starting with our faith in Jesus Christ. We're systematically adding things to it. And we get down to brotherly affection.