

## Phil 1:7,8      **PAUL'S LOVE for the PHILIPPIANS**

PRELIMS. It was said about John Calvin that he had a brilliant mind, but he had **no feelings** – he wasn't a warm character! That was also true about John **Knox**! Some historians wonder what way the Reformation may have gone in England and Scotland, **if** Knox had shown a little more warmth in his debates with **Queen Mary**!! Well, Paul **did** have '**feelings**' "*I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus*"[8] He loved and cared for everyone of them without exception. He adds "*It is right for me to feel this way about you all*"[7].

**APP** You see Paul has a **pastor's heart**! He is **concerned** for the people he ministers to "*I hold you in my heart*"[7] That is wonderful! **Beware** of the Bible teacher who does not **love** his flock? The teacher who is **content** simply to **declare** the Word and **not** be **concerned** about the **response** of the hearers! The pastor who does **not care** whether people believe or disbelieve his message, is not a true pastor! He is just a communicator of information, in the job for the money – not for the **good** and **wellbeing** of the people to whom he ministers!

It is so essential to have a **heart** and love for those to whom we minister. Listen to Paul toward those who **spurned** his teaching about Christ "*My heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved*"[Rom 10:1] To the Cors "*I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you*"[2C2:4] **APP** Do you **pray** for those who have insulted your faith? Do you **weep** for them? Is it really **your heart's desire** to see those who have done you a bad turn, completely and totally forgiven?

What is lovely here is that Paul loved **all** that were in the Church at Philippi – not just the ones who 'sided' with him. They were all **covenanted** believers so they were all **especially** precious to him. Paul said "*you are all partakers with me of*

*grace*”[7] In fact he says they were all in “*partnership in the gospel*” with him [5]. Paul and they were **all united together** in the gospel! Paul **classified** them all as “*saints in Christ Jesus*” and conferred on them all the same grace at the beginning **and** at the end of his letter!

That is **amazing** for it seems there were some real **shady** characters among them! Paul says about some of them “*many of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as the enemies of the cross of Christ...(with)...minds set on earthly things*”[3:18,19] **APP** I am sure, if we are honest, many of us here at Dens Road very often have **minds** set on earthy things and have a **walk** that is in opposition to the gospel I wonder how Paul would address us.

We need to remember that the Church is actually a **spiritual hospital**! It is **not** heaven where all the saints are sanctified and ‘made perfect’! It is a place where we are **nurtured** and fed and cared for! As in a medical hospital, it is also a place where we are **warned** about what is **dangerous** for us. Church is a place where we should come out **healed**! And **equipped** with the knowledge of how we must live and what we must **avoid**!

The Church in the NT, as well as in the OT, was **not pure** at all! Listen to Apostle Peter: “*But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them*” Peter has no doubt about where they will end up: they are “*bringing upon themselves swift destruction*” [2Pet2:1] He is talking about those who “*feast with you*” at the Lord's Supper, and yet, he says “*...they themselves are slaves of corruption*”[2P2:13,19]!

There is also the testimony of **Jude**: “*certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ*”

[4] Note: he was writing to those who have been “called, who are beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ”[1]!

So, there **are** among the people of God, those who **profess** the true religion, but are actually **unbelievers**! Some have **deceived** themselves! Paul tells us clearly that were **impostors** (those who pose as believers) who “*will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived” [2Tim 3:13]. So, there always was, and always will be a **mixed** multitude in Church!*

You really have to **go yourself** to hospital – first the doctor – but if **you** never take the **first** step of **admitting** you need healing, you will never be cured. That’s Church. Going to the Drs and going to Church are identical in many ways! Some people never go to Church because they do not like what they hear – even **although** it is **true**! People are **afraid** of what they might hear – that affects them personally! Just as some won’t go to the doctors about a problem so they don’t go to Church!

Even after you are admitted to the doctors or hospital and given the appropriate medicine – if you **do not take** it, you will never be healed! Doctors and ministers can **care** and **love** you to bits, but if you refuse to take the medicine you need, and live the way you are supposed to live, you will never be healed!

Christian teachers and leaders are **spiritual doctors**.

Think of all the **various types** of people who would have been in the Philippian Church: There would likely be the Philippian **jailer**! Perhaps he would be quite a **'hard'** man having dealt with criminals as a daily occupation? \*There would be the **girl** who earned a living by foretelling the future and had an **evil spirit** cast out. She might be inclined to give an undue place to spiritual experiences more than theological truths? \*Then I am sure there would be **Lydia** whose heart opened like a flower as Paul preached the gospel. She would perhaps be inclined to be 'soft' on love? \*There would be the **women** who regularly gathered for **prayer** at the riverside! Would they need **practical**

teaching now that they had the truth? \*And there would be the **families** of the Jailer and Lydia – what were they like? The young would need instruction re fleeing youthful lusts!

Certainly **none** of these Xns had any Xn/Covenantal upbringing from their earliest years – how did they respond to this **new** 'faith oriented' religion? A wide **variety** of **instruction** was needed to minister to all these different kinds of backgrounds, experiences and aptitudes! Would they all stand firm in the faith? How many of them would fall from grace?

As far as Paul was concerned, he **loved** them all. He wanted to see them all – not just in heaven – but **growing** in their faith on **this side** of heaven! He was **not dilatory** in his duty towards them. He was **conscientious** about his calling.

Paul was **more** concerned for their salvation and their growth in grace that **ruffling feathers!** Paul gospel **upset people!** Paul was **personally** attacked and was severely **flogged** and thrown into **prison**[Acts 16:23] **because** he preached the **gospel!** I sometimes wonder, are we trying to **accommodate** the world and make the gospel so 'user-friendly' that it is just not the same gospel as Paul taught! The gospel **upsets** people – just as you can be upset in coming back from the doctors – but if we accept the remedy, it can be the best thing that ever happened to us!

Paul was **honest** with his audiences! He told them, not what they wanted to hear, but what they **needed** to hear! And then what did he do? I believe he went to **pray** for them! I believe he went to **check up** on them? Were they taking their 'medicines'!