

22S07 Philippians 1:3-11 Thanksgiving

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today I want to continue our study of Philippians with Philippians 1:3-11.

Before we start, let us remember this short letter was most likely written by the Apostle Paul while he was in prison in Rome. Paul had first visited Philippi during his second missionary journey and he has great affection for the church in Philippi. This letter is sometimes called “the Joy Epistle” because of thankful and joyful tone. But remember Paul is in prison in Rome, not very happy circumstances.

I’m reading from the New King James version (NKJV) today. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Let’s read Philippians 1:3-11 (NKJV) *³I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ⁵for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; ⁷just 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. ⁸For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. ⁹And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

Let’s pray. Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your word from Philippians, help us see why Paul is so thankful and joyful despite his situation. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

So, before we start studying. If you are an English professor, I’m sorry, verse 3-8 are one very long sentence. But remember Greek did not have our sentence structure or even punctuation.

So, let’s break these verse down to some main points. Starting with just verse 3 Philippians 1:3 (NKJV) *“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,”*. I don’t want us to miss what Paul is saying. Every time he thinks of the people in Philippi, Paul takes time to thank God for them. Can you imagine if you did this? Every time you think about a person that has helped you, some one you care about. Stop what you are doing for a moment and praise God for that person. Pray for that person. I bet you would be more joyful, more thankful, in a better mood. Try it and see if it doesn’t brighten your day.

Paul continues with *⁴always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ⁵for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,* (Philippians 1:4-5 NKJV). Paul is earnestly praying for them and he remembers the fellowship they shared in the gospel of Jesus Christ from the very first day they met until now. Remember now is Paul in prison in Rome. Paul is remembering their friendship and how they have continued to be part of Paul's ministry. From the first day until now.

Paul continues with *⁶being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;* (Philippians 1:6 NKJV). I want us to really take in what Paul is telling the Philippians. Paul is confident God is working in the lives of the Philippians and will keep working in their lives until the day of Jesus Christ. Paul means, this as a great encouragement. He knows God is working in their lives and will complete that work in them and we can trust in that. The day of Jesus Christ is referring to the second coming of Christ, which of course Paul anticipated as soon. But of course, in God's time soon is hundreds or even thousands of years.

Next Paul says, *⁷just 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.* (Philippians 1:7 NKJV). Paul reminds them why he is in prison. Because of his defense and confirmation of the gospel. Then again encouragement. Paul knows the followers of Jesus in Philippi are sharing in the grace of our Lord. Grace that even though we aren't perfect, Jesus gives us His perfection so we can stand confidently before God. We can have a relationship with God through Jesus. That is partaking in the grace of God, in a very powerful and life changing way.

Now I want to read the next few verses together. Paul says, *⁸For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. ⁹And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.* (Philippians 1:8-11 NKJV).

Paul starts this phrase with God is my witness. We better pay attention. Love may abound or our love for Jesus and others should be our focus as we grow in knowledge and ability to discern. Such that, we choose things that are excellent, we are sincere and without offense. We should be filled with the fruit of righteousness. This is not our righteousness but the righteousness of Jesus Christ. All glory and praise to God. Amen.

Let's review.

- 1) What should we do when we think about people.? Stop what we are doing for a moment and thank God for them, then pray for them. I this is an excellent way to live. Thanking God for the people He has put in our lives. Joyful, Thankful attitude.

- 2) What if Paul so confident about? God. He trusts God. And because he trusts God, he knows God is working in the lives of the followers of Jesus, just like Jesus is working in Paul's life. Even though Paul is in prison, he trusts God and is joyful.
- 3) Love may abound, what does Paul mean? Love this is the most important commandment according to Jesus. We are to Love God with everything we have, money, time, energy, our life all of it. And Jesus says love everyone else like Jesus loves them. This is love abounding. If we can love like this, then it will help us choose excellent things, be sincere and have no offenses. Obviously, we fail at this sometimes but that's not the point. This is our target, to love God and love others and let that love guide our decision, our words and actions.

Let me leave you with this. Paul is in prison. A Roman prison in Rome. It's probably not a great situation. Paul speaks of his chains which are probably literally the chains on his body as he writes. But hear this. Paul is thankful to God and joyful even in prison in chains. He is hopeful. He is confident. Not in his strength because he has none. He trusts God with everything and everyone. Amen.

Let's Pray. Heavenly Father thank you for this letter from Paul. Help us to read and meditate on this letter so we can hear the message you have for us. Help us to follow Paul's example and acknowledge those who help us and those who deserve our respect. Then help us to remember who you are Lord. You are our king, king of kings. You are our Lord, Lord over everyone. We can trust you Lord. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen

I hope you will join us for the rest of our study of Philippians. Please email me comments or feedback. Thank you for joining me today. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.