



Sunday, September 18, 2011: Philippians, the Gospel, and Community

Scripture: Phil. 2:1-2; Eph. 4:1-25 **Speaker:** Joe Boot

Sermon Notes:

1. The Philippian church was the first church that Paul planted in Europe. The letter is dated about AD 62.
2. At Westminster, we've laid a foundation in the prophets and the gospels over the past three years; this is our first letter from Paul.
3. Doctrine doesn't emerge in Paul's writing; Paul is a faithful interpreter of Jesus and the scriptures.
4. Philippians is a letter of joy and rejoicing and love for this church because of their partnership in the gospel.
5. Two themes are interwoven in Philippians: the glory of the gospel, and the community of love that the gospel creates.
6. Paul probably wrote the letter from Rome while confined awaiting trial before Caesar.
7. Paul's captivity was itself for the furtherance of the gospel as certain guards were being converted.
8. The Philippian church sent Paul a gift for his needs.
9. Paul developed relationships and natural affections with the people and converts where he ministered.
10. There were family conversions at Philippi: Lydia and her household, the jailer and his household.
11. The gospel established a community of household worship; the father of a house was the appointed head, who would lead the household in worship and instruction in the scriptures.
12. The pagan world by contrast saw no essential bond in the family; the state was the center of worship.
13. Paul doesn't even need to establish his apostleship in this letter; he describes himself as a slave of Christ.
14. The church is all about partnership in the gospel and the furtherance of the gospel.
15. Paul is concerned about unity in the congregation, threatened by Pharisaical formalism, and antinomian immorality.
16. This letter calls us to the life of Christ and the life in Christ.
17. As a church develops there are challenges where there's a greater need to fill gaps and strengthen relationships. Certain vision, policy and housekeeping items need to be addressed.
18. All these things must not allow us to move away from our priority which is our unity and partnership in the gospel.
19. We're not providing a public service to meet people's consumer needs; we're striving together for the furtherance of the gospel.
20. As Paul addressed two women in the church, commanding them to be of the same mind, so we need to.
21. The church cannot be about a man or a style, but it is about the furtherance of the gospel.
22. Both in my imprisonment and in the defense of the gospel, Christ is glorified. We're to model citizenship in the heavenly kingdom now.
23. The gospel that Paul has in mind is the good news, that Jesus Christ is Lord.
24. We're to recognize the Lordship of Jesus Christ in everything by our humble service to one another.
25. Michael Ignatieff recently stated that all sovereignty and the source of all law is in the State.
26. If we are in Christ, we already are a covenant community. We simply need too learn to live in community.
27. An enemy of gospel ministry is people in the church divided against one another.
28. The enemy of our souls will use any excuse possible to create disunity and to pull down the Lord's work.
29. We have the same spirit and the shared unity because we share in the same gift (Phil 2:1-4).
30. It is the Holy Spirit who unites us in striving together in the gospel as the new people of God.
31. The fruit of Paul's ministry included converts in Caesar's household, who acknowledged the reign of King Jesus.

Application Questions

1. What do we know about the background of Paul's letter to the Philippians?
2. What are two main themes in Philippians?
3. How are Paul's letters related to the rest of Scripture?
4. Contrast the Roman and biblical view of the family.
5. How should we view interpersonal conflicts within the church in light of spiritual warfare?
6. How can I promote unity in my own relationships within the church?