

# Philippians 1:1-11 Discussion Questions

## Outline of Pastor Mike's Sermon

### Intro

- Our journey thus far in 2018
- The power of liturgy
  - Reading of Philippians 2.5-11
- Table of Contents
  - A Perfectly Ordinary, Unusual Introduction
  - Gratitude
  - Affection
  - Intercession

### A Perfectly Ordinary, Unusual Introduction (v.1-2)

- A normal, Greco-Roman introduction to a letter include identification of the author, recipients and a greeting
  - Paul's identification as a servant is unusual
  - Paul's ascription of grace and peace is crucial

### Gratitude (v.3-6)

- *Certainly the English word 'thanksgiving' is rather more limited in its range of meanings since it normally denotes the expression of gratitude for personal benefits received and is to that extent rather man-centred. But this sort of notion does not fit Paul's language, for, as here, he regularly gives thanks for graces wrought in the lives of others by God, particularly those within the churches of the Gentile mission. - O'Brien, P. T. (1991). The Epistle to the Philippians: a commentary on the Greek text (pp. 56–57). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.*
- Grateful for his remembrance of them (past)
- Grateful for their current partnership (present)
- Grateful the continued and one day completed activity of Christ in them (future)

### Affection (v.7-8)

- Strong affection for their continued commitment to him

### Intercession (v.9-11)

- Prayer for love to abound so that they would grow in

- Knowledge- experiential relationship with the Lord
- Discernment- decisive understanding of the obedience that flows from this love of God and others
- May be found justified before Christ
- Display tangible evidence of their right standing to God

### **Implications**

- Comparison distracts us from the pursuit of Christ
- The pursuit of Christ is a master class in humility

### **Reflection Questions**

- In what way has comparison distracted your pursuit of Christ?
- If the pursuit of Christ involves a total life devotion to servanthood, where are you struggling? Where are attempting to promote yourself instead of humbling yourself as Christ did?

### Discussion Questions

Read Philippians 1:1-11

1. Paul opens up this letter by describing himself as a servant. Paul is just following Jesus' example, as we see in 2:5-11, who became a servant and gave his life for others.

a. What does it look like, practically speaking, to serve those in your life (family, friends, co-workers, etc.) the way Jesus has served you?

b. We all struggle to be the servants we should be. What hinders you from serving others in the way that you are called to?

c. In what areas has the Lord been teaching you to serve others? How has he been doing this?

2. One of the things that can often hinder our service to others is the temptation to promote ourselves, i.e., to make ourselves seem more important.

a. What motivates us to act this way?

b. How does the gospel help us to overcome our need to promote ourselves?

3. Servanthood is rooted in humility. Jesus displays this more clearly than anyone. Paul also displays this in vv. 3-6 as he expresses his gratitude for the ways God is working in and blessing the Philippians. In other words, instead of being jealous and comparing his situation to theirs, he is able to rejoice when they are blessed.

a. In what ways is comparison distracting you from your pursuit of Christ and hindering your ability to rejoice when others are blessed?

b. What false beliefs lie behind your struggle and how does the gospel address them?