

Week 33

Philippians / Προς Φιλιππησιους / To The Philippians

This week we get to read the epistle of joy. Joy or rejoice (χαρα / χαιρω). is mentioned 3x per chapter. In this epistle there is none of the feistiness and anger of Galatians, none of the anxiety of Peter's letters, none of the correction and exasperation found in the letters to the Corinthians, none of the distance of Colossians or Romans.

This was one of the four prison epistles, along with Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. Interestingly, Paul and Silas spent some time and found some church members in a Philippian Prison. The letter is from Paul and Timothy (Timothy also co-authored 2 Corinthians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon).

The town was named by Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, after himself. Apparently, narcissism was a problem back then too. By the time of this letter Philippi had been populated for 5 centuries. It was a Roman colony (a big deal in terms of power and influence) and was populated by Greeks and Romans. The church in Philippi was the first church in Europe (Macedonia) planted by Paul (Acts 16:11-40).

The teaching on Christ in the second chapter (Christ Hymn: 6-11), the theme of joy, and the imperatives of chapter 4, and the leadership of women stand out as high points.

This will be a fun week.

Sunday, July 10

Philippians 1

For Reflection: Who are your Philippians, people who hold you in their heart (vs. 7)? Besides family, who do you hold in your heart? Things to note: this church is experiencing suffering (sounds like imprisonments) and the oft quoted "To live is Christ, to die is gain." is found in this chapter. Verse 25 speaks of "joy in the faith", is your faith a primary source of joy? Joy sightings: vs 3,18 (2x) and 25.

Lagniappe: Psalm 118:24

Monday, July 11

Philippians 2:1-11

For Reflection: Paul in this powerful passage offers the imitation of Christ as the touchstone of the Christian life and behavior. *What would it look like to imitate Christ's humility? In what circumstances do you need to remember you have been exalted with Christ? Which aspect of Jesus turns your head, his willingness to humble himself for us or his exalted/sovereign place in the universe? To whom, or to what cause, have you bent your knee (10)? Joy sightings: vs 2*

Lagniappe: Deuteronomy 18:9, Isaiah 53:12, Isaiah 45:22-23

- Tuesday, July 12** Philippians 2:12-20
For Reflection: What percentage of your daily words are complaint or argument (14)? In what context are you shining like a star in the night (15)?
 Joy Sightings: 17, 18, 28, 29
Lagniappe: Daniel 12:3
- Wednesday, July 13** Philippians 3:1-11
For Reflection: What parts of your past do you most need to make a break from? Is Paul trusting in his own righteousness to experience resurrection (9-11). What are you trusting in? In verse 10 Paul declares what he most wants. What do you want? Joy Sightings: 1
Lagniappe: Isaiah 64:6
- Thursday, July 14** Philippians 3:12-21
For Reflection: *How has your experience of the life of faith been like a race, a marathon, a hard to achieve goal? What is your spiritual goal for this year?*
Lagniappe: Jeremiah 12:5
- Friday, July 15** Philippians 4:1-9
For Reflection: In this passage there are 7 imperatives directed at the church. They are: 1/2) Rejoice in the Lord (2X), 3) Let your gentleness be known to all, 4) Don't worry about anything, 5) Make your request known to God – pray 6) Fill your thoughts with the good stuff. 7) Persist. *Which of these is the most challenging to obey? Which is the most important for you to prioritize?*
Lagniappe: Habakkuk:3:17-19
- Saturday, July 16** Philippians 4:11- 23
For Reflection: 4:13 is quoted by believing athletes everywhere. But it's really about contentment. OOPS - super ironic. *About what circumstance are you not content today?* For clarity I don't think Paul or God wants us to be content with sin in the world – like injustice. Keep your answer personal and real.
Lagniappe: Philippians 4:6