



Philippians 1:1-11 “Gospel Partnerships”
August 28th, 2016

OBSERVE & REFLECT

(This section is designed to encourage us to reflect on and observe the scripture and weekend sermon.)

READ Philippians 1:1-11

- ☀ Read the text at least twice. Try reading the text from two different translations.
- ☀ What do you observe in the text? What jumps out at you and grabs your attention? What questions do you have from the text? Pay attention to any action words or phrases and observe what the implications are.

INVESTIGATE & APPLY

(This section focuses on what the scripture has to say as we dig deeper into the Word. It is oriented to create discussion on the Scripture.)

1. Take a few minutes to read Acts 16:14-40, which give us much of the background story for the book of Philippians. What was Paul's role among these people?
2. Read Philippians 1:1. Who is the letter addressed to? What does Paul mean by “saints”?
3. Read verses 3-11. Paul's language is extremely warm and personal in these verses. Why?
4. List some of the things that Paul is thankful for in the Philippians, in verses 3-7, and the things that he prays for them in verses 9-11. Look also at Eph. 1:1-15, Col. 1:9-14, and 2 Thess. 1:3-12. What similarities do you see among these prayers?
5. Read verse 6. Paul assures the Philippians that their spiritual state is proof of God's “good work” in them. He also insists that if God “began a good work” in them, he “will bring it to completion.” How might these statements be simultaneously confidence-building as well as pride-crushing.

NEXT STEPS

- ☀ The Greek word behind “partnership” in verse 5 is sometimes translated “fellowship”. Unfortunately, for many Christians today fellowship has connotations of merely getting together for food. So, “partnership” is a better word, especially here. Remember the Philippians prayerfully and even financially supported Paul's missionary work. Remarkably, they even indirectly shared in Paul's “imprisonment and...defense and confirmation of the Gospel” (v.7). Do you have any “gospel partnerships”? What do these (or should these) types of relationships look like?
- ☀ Having looked at several of Paul's prayers, what things do you see Paul emphasizing in his prayers? What kinds of things is he praying for? Why? How might this challenge the way that we pray?

Gospel Partnerships:
The Gospel binds us together—nothing else is strong enough: men & women, young & old, blue collar & white collar, health & ill, rich & poor, different races, education levels, and personalities. Only the gospel is able to unite this diverse group, as we share it the good news: in Jesus, God has reconciled us to himself.



Philippians 1:1-11

[1] Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

[2] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[3] I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, [4] always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, [5] because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. [6] And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. [7] It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. [8] For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. [9] And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, [10] so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, [11] filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.