

**“It Is Right for Me to Feel this Way about You All”**  
Philippians 1:3-11

**Thankful (vv. 3-5)**

- Paul loved the Philippian church.
  - Paul was writing to a people among whom he had ministered.
    - Lydia was converted in Philippi. (Acts 16)
    - The Philippian jailer was converted through Paul’s imprisonment there. (Acts 16)
  - Paul was writing to a people from whom he had received help.

*And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. (Philippians 4:15)*

- The Philippian congregation brought Paul joy even in imprisonment.
- Fellowship in the gospel is unlike anything else in terms of depth, durability, and delight.
  - The baptismal waters are thicker than blood.
  - Jesus redefines our deepest relationships.
- We should thank God for the experience of fellowship and partnership in the gospel.

*It is by the grace of God that a congregation is permitted to gather visibly in this world to share God’s word and sacrament. Not all Christians receive this blessing. The imprisoned, the sick, the scattered lonely, the proclaimers of the gospel in heathen lands stand alone... a scattered seed according to God’s will.*

*Therefore, let him who until now has had the privilege of living a common Christian life with other Christians praise God’s grace from the bottom of his heart. Let him thank God on his knees and declare: it is grace, nothing but grace, that we are allowed to live in community with Christian brethren. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)*

**Hopeful (vv. 6-8)**

- Paul anchors all his thanksgiving and prayers in the faithfulness of God.

*Paul’s confidence is not in the Christianity of the Christians but in the God-ness of God, who is supremely trustworthy, able, and committed to finish the work he has begun. The ‘good work’, at the end of the day, is not Paul’s, nor that of the Philippians, but God’s. (Markus Bockmuehl)*

- God never quits anything.
- If God has saved you, God will save you.

*The perseverance of the saints rests on the perseverance of God with the saints. (Stott)*

- Paul's Godward confidence was founded in the church's partnership in the gospel.

*Paul does not commend them for the fine times they had shared watching games in the arena. He doesn't mention their literature discussion groups or the excellent meals they had, although undoubtedly they had enjoyed some fine times together. What lies at the center of all his ties with them, doubtless including meals and discussion, is this passion for the gospel, this partnership in the gospel.*

*Nothing else is strong enough to hold together the extraordinary diversity of people who constitute many churches: men and women, young and old, blue collar and white, healthy and ill, different races, incomes, levels of education, personalities. What holds us together? It is the gospel, the good news that in Jesus, God himself has reconciled us to himself. This brings about a precious God-centeredness that we share with other believers. (D.A. Carson)*

- Application:
  - We can be hopeful because of the grace we've seen.
  - You can be hopeful because of the grace that's available.

### Prayerful (vv. 9-11)

- We pray for love and knowledge to grow.

- Love is indispensable.

*And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (1 Cor 13:2)*

- Knowledge is invaluable.

*A virtuous man may be ignorant, but ignorance is not a virtue. It would be a strange God who could be loved better by being known less. Love of God is not the same thing as knowledge of God; love of God is immeasurably more important than knowledge of God; but if a man loves God knowing a little about Him, he should love God more from knowing more about Him: for every new thing known about God is a new reason for loving Him. (Frank Sheed)*

- We aim for fruit and glory for Christ.

*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:4-7)*