

Ordinary Joy

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[0:00] So, Simon will continue to obviously preach through Ruth when he's back, and then when he's away, those of us, kind of the B team as it were, will step in and look at the book of, and it's an amazing, they understand the meaning of the cross, the deep meaning of the cross.

Because it's only when we come to the cross that we understand the depth and the love of the Father's heart towards each one of us, that we understand the cost of our sins.

And the way to salvation is only through faith in Jesus, his death and resurrection. You see, Jesus didn't say that he was a way, or even he was the best way.

He said that he was the way. He says, I am the way, the truth, the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me, which is John 14, 6.

Amen? Now, we begin to get that sense then why in this book, around about 16 times in the book of Philippians, Paul mentions the word joy or rejoicing or rejoice.

[1:10] Even under these difficult and challenging circumstances, like the writer in Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiastes 3 says, there's a time to weep and there's a time to laugh.

A deep joy that is not based upon what the world is doing at this moment in time, but it's based on our personal relationship with Jesus. That's our deep joy.

And as we heard Sam Raju say a few weeks ago, when he was talking about the story of the beginning of a particular song, and he says, we have decided to follow Jesus.

There's no turning back. There's no turning back. Why? Because of God's incredible love for us.

Because of his incredible grace towards us. Because of his incredible joy towards us.

That we have received the Lord. Let's pray before we read. Lord, we thank you for your word. We thank you that it is a lamp before our feet.

[2:12] And we give you all the glory, Lord. We give you all the honor. We give you all the praise. And just pray that you will guide our thoughts. You will change us by your word and your spirit. In Jesus' name.

Amen. If you'd like to open your Bibles. If you haven't got a Bible, there are some at the back. To Philippians chapter 1. And we'll start reading from verse 1 to verse 11.

I'm reading in the NASB version. Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus. To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi.

With the overseers and deacons. Grace to you. And peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you.

Always in every prayer of mine. For you all making my prayer with joy. Because of your partnership in the gospel. From the first day until now.

[3:12] That I am sure of this. That he who began a good work in you. Will bring it to completion in the day of Christ Jesus. 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.

For God is my witness. How I yearn for you all with affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more.

With knowledge and all discernment. So that you may approve what is excellent. And so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ. Filled with the fruit of righteousness.

That comes through Jesus Christ. To the glory and praise of God. Amen. So as we start this new book. I just want to give you a little bit of context.

[4:11] And a little bit of background. I've got kind of about three slides. And a bit full of text I'm afraid. And then they kind of simplify a little bit. Just to see the journey that Paul has been on.

To get us to this point. As he is in. As him and his companions are in Asia Minor. And they're actively seeking. They're not just sat there just praying. Doing nothing. You know wondering what the Lord's going to do next. But they're actively seeking. Where to go to preach the gospel. That's it. That's their most important mission. So they try to get into Asia.

And the Lord says no. They try to go into Bithynia. The Lord says no. They eventually end up in a place called Troas. And we all know the kind of story. That in Troas we've got.

Paul has this vision. Of a man that's calling him to the province of Macedonia. So Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke. Sail to the province of Macedonia.

[5:05] And they end up in the city of Philippi. And this is the first place in Europe. That the gospel is preached at that time. And this is Paul's second missionary journey.

And he enters confidently as a Roman citizen. As it's an important Roman colony that he goes into. He's confident of his freedom. He's confident of his safety.

As he goes in there. And he looks as is his custom for a synagogue. Where he begins to preach the gospel. But he can't find one. There's not enough men in that city to form a synagogue.

So he finds a group of Jewish women. By some water that's there. By a river. And he preaches the gospel. And one of them in particular. Gets converted.

A business woman called Lydia. It says she's a seller of fine fabric. That is there. And this woman is the first convert in Europe.

[6:01] And you can read that in Acts 16. Verses 1 to 15. And following that in verse 16 onwards. 1624. Paul is continuing to preach the gospel.

Everywhere he goes. That's all he does. Is preach the gospel. And we read then about a young slave woman. Who has made her money. And the money for her slave owners.

From fortune telling. And she keeps shouting out. That these men are from the God most high.

Listen to them. And there's nothing wrong with the message. It's a good message. But the source of that message.

Is demonic. The source of that message. Is evil. And the Lord doesn't need the devil doing his work for him. But Paul doesn't do anything immediately.

He waits. It's almost like he's listening. Well I think he is. For the Lord to give him permission. For the Lord's timing. To say to him. Now you can cast that demon out of the woman.

[6:57] Which he then does. Eventually. And what we see is Paul. In the same way as Jesus. Is always in that constant communion with the Father. There's that constant conversation.

About where he's going. What's he doing. What's the timing. That he's doing. And it's a model to us today. Because we so often rush on. In our own strength. That we need to listen.

And be obedient. To what the Lord is saying. Whether it's sailing from the coast of Troas. If we ever find ourselves there. Or whether it's casting out demons. Or healing. Or whatever it might be. But unfortunately.

This causes trouble for Paul. Because the business model. That her masters are. Built their life upon. With this demon possessed woman.

Is broken. And that causes problems. For both Paul and Silas in particular. Where they find them. Not for the first time. But in prison. In Acts 16. 24. And as they're praying.

[7:54] And singing joyful songs. In prison. Having been beaten. I just imagine that. You know. The Lord is tapping his foot. Going along there. You know. Good old singing.

And there's an earthquake. There's an earthquake. But before they escape. Before they leave.

They leave the jailer to the Lord. That the gospel is the thing. That is driving them here. And then eventually.

They flee. And they head to the city. Of Thessalonica. Again. To preach the gospel. Where they get into more trouble. And eventually. End up in Athens. Where they're engaged with the Jews.

And the Gentiles. And the philosophers of that time. Where they are just defending the gospel.

They're explaining the gospel. They're explaining what Jesus did on the cross. And eventually.

They leave there. In Acts 18. To Corinth. And then we come to Paul's. Third missionary journey.

Where again. He's taking every opportunity. To preach the gospel.

[8:49] But this time. He's collecting money. He's collecting arms. To take back to. The church. In. In Jerusalem. And in Judea. And he wants to get there.

Before Pentecost. In Acts 20. 16. And through these trials. And tribulations. We see much humility. We see many tears. But Paul.

Never shrinks away. From declaring. The biblical message. Of the cross. Because he says. He's always profitable. And he's always. Should be testifying. To the truth. Both to the Jew.

And to the Greek. Of repentance. Towards God. And our faith. In the Lord Jesus Christ. He is relentless. For the gospel. And then we get. To Caesarea.

And in Caesarea. He encounters. A prophet. Called Agabus. In Acts 21. 10 to 11. And this prophet. Takes Paul's belt. Ties up his own.

[9 : 44] Hands and feet. And he says. The Holy Spirit. Has showed me. That the person. Who owns this belt. This is what is going. To happen to him. Not long after.

Paul then heads. To Jerusalem. And he spoke. With the elders there. And the apostles. About his travels. And all the things. That the Lord has done. And they rejoice. And they glorify God.

In how he has. Used. And how he's. Accomplished the things. That he's done. For his kingdom. Through Paul. And his companions. And he obviously. Gives them the money. That he's collected. On route.

In Acts 21. 27 to 40. Describes what happens next. That men from Asia. Stir up trouble. And you guessed it. Paul is. Is then taken.

And bound in chains. Both foot. And hand. And taken to the barracks. Just as the prophet said. But not before again. Giving his testimony. And spreading the gospel.

[10 : 38] Paul's love. For the Lord. And for the people around him. Is so deep. It is nothing. He cannot do anything. But serve the Lord. And he will not waste.

One opportunity. To see a soul. Saved. In Acts 22. We have Paul. Is about to be beaten. And he pulls out his trump card. To say that he's a Roman citizen. And they release him.

To the Sanhedrin. At that time. Moving on to. Getting towards the end. Of the book of Acts. Acts 23. 11. We read about how. The Lord speaks to Paul. And tells him.

That he's been a solemn. Witness. To the Lord. In Jerusalem. But he now. Must go to Rome. And be a witness. For him there. And God again. Is directing his path.

In the same way. As he directed his path. From Troas. In the same way. As he directed his path. Through all the places. That he's been. And after some trials. With Festus. And Felix. Caught in a storm.

[11 : 33] Bitten by a snake. He eventually. In Acts 28. Arise in Rome. Where again. He is placed in prison. Under close guard. And from here. Paul writes this epistle.

Writing. While he's waiting. For his appeal. To Caesar. Timothy. And Epaphroditus. Are there as well. I think that. We have Timothy.

That is basically. Taking dictation. From Paul. As his time. As he waits. For the Roman authorities. They have no. Um. Uncion. To feed him. Or to clothe him.

Like any prisoner. At that time. So it was down. To family and friends. To do that for you. And we read. That the church in Philippi. Had sent support. To Paul. To continue.

His ministry. In defending the gospel. And if we look now. At the. The chapter. Chapter one. In Philippians. Verses one and two.

[12 : 28] This brings us. To one of four letters. Or epistles. That Paul writes. From prison. There's basically. Three epistles. And there's one personal letter. Which is to. Philemon.

And the passage. Has five sections. That I put on. On the screen. And there's a. A common theme. You'll see throughout them. They all say joy. There's a joy to serve. There's a joy to pray.

The joy to share the gospel. The joy of certainty. In faith. And a joy of full righteousness. Through Christ. The epistle. Is about. A deep joy.

In all aspects. Of life. The belief. A brief summary. Of basically. I've given you. The last third. Of the book of Acts. Outlines.

Just a little bit. Of what Paul's life. Was like. And yet. Through that. He experiences. This deep joy. That only comes through faith. In Christ Jesus. And no one else.

[13 : 23] Therefore. Our lives. As we stand out from the crowd. For Jesus. Is that. We lead. Others. And ourselves.

Into that same love. That others may love us. Others may hate us. In a world that preaches tolerance. I find it interesting. Why. Why Christians.

In particular. Are persecuted. More than. Anyone else. This deep down joy. Does not come. By chance. There may be momentary happiness.

In life. That we get. But that deep down. Confidence. Of joy. Only comes through faith. In Jesus Christ. Which is accomplished. On the cross. And Psalm 4.

7 to 8. Tells us. That joy comes. From the Lord. In John 15. 11. To those. Who believe. The gospel. [14 : 16] A gift. From God. Who believe. And have faith. In Christ Jesus. And Paul also writes. In 1 Thessalonians 1. 6. That we are. Should all be. Imitators. Of Paul.

As Paul. Is an imitator. Of Christ. It says later on. Where we receive. The word. With joy. By the Holy Spirit. Paul starts his letter. Not by stating. That he's an apostle.

Which he does. In quite a few. Other letters. But in Philippi. They knew. And they trusted. That he was. An apostle of Christ. He calls himself. And Timothy. His companion.

Bond servants. Some of your translations. May say slaves. I think bond servant. Is a better translation. A bond servant. Of whom? A bond servant. Of Christ Jesus. And here.

I think we immediately see. The heart of Paul. As that incredible. Spiritual leader. A shepherd. To the church. Constantly helping people.

[15 : 10] Grow closer. To Jesus. As we should be doing. As a church. As part of the body of Christ. Helping each other. To get closer to the Lord. To walk closer with him.

This is not just the work of Simon. And the leaders in the church. Here at Calvary. But it's everybody. Everybody should have a shepherd's heart. Whether you're at school.

Whether you're at home. Whether you're at work. Whatever it is. We should all have that desire. To be bond servants. Of Christ Jesus. And encourage those around us. To be like him.

Which is why it's important. To meet during the week. And all that kind of stuff. That we've been saying. And it says. Parents. Teach your children. Teach them biblically. In Proverbs 22. 6. Train your child.

In the way they should go. And they won't depart from it. But train them in the word. Of the Lord. Then. When people walk into Calvary Chapel. Here in Southampton.

[16 : 06] What do they see? What do they feel? What do they encounter? When they walk through the door? Some of us have been here for a while. And we kind of get used to it.

But we almost forget. When new people walk through the door. What do they see? What do they feel? What do they encounter? Is there a kindred spirit here? Do they see servants of the Lord Jesus Christ?

That is there. Paul sees his life as set apart for Christ. And we say these words. Don't we? But what do they actually mean? And this is the question that I often ask myself.

How often do I see myself set apart for Christ? And what does that mean as I do my normal job? And the daily stuff that we go through. Especially when we're going through difficult times.

Especially when life is not all easy and smooth. Because it's easy then to become a Christian. Paul is now a prisoner in Rome. And he mentions this four times in chapter 1.

[17 : 04] Yet always willing to be a servant of Christ. A permanent bondservant of the Lord. And in Exodus 21.5.

The law of Moses allows for a slave to be a permanent bondservant to their master. Someone who has a deep love and a deep loyalty to their master.

They can be taken and a wooden dowel can be shoved through their ear. As it were. As an outward sign. That they are committed for the rest of their lives to their master.

And Paul in his body had many signs that he was committed to following his master. Through the beatings that he has had across his body. He addresses this letter to the saints.

Those who are separate. Those who are unique. Those who are holy. The Hebrew word is kadosh. It means set apart. Not some super pious people.

[18 : 04] Or some dead Catholic saint. But ordinary people. Like you and I. Are called saints. Those that have been made righteous. By Christ's death. And resurrection.

Who are forgiven because of what Christ did. And therefore Paul is addressing this letter to the saints. Which includes the overseers and the deacons. Everyone. So you know.

There is a Saint Tim for example. That's there. He's looking at me now. There's a Saint Norma. We are saints in the Lord. In verse 2. Paul greets them with two terms.

Grace and peace. And they're always in that order. Paul uses the combination of the Greek term. Which is charis. Which means grace. But he uses the Hebrew term.

Shalom. Meaning peace. The reason is that. Until you understand the incredible grace of the Lord. You can never truly understand.

[19:00] His deep wholesome peace. That transcends all understanding. In Ephesians 1.7. We read. The riches of his grace. Culminates in sending.

In the sending of his son to the cross. To redeem sinners like us. This gracious work is brought about. By that deep. And full. Peace.

And joy. That God in Ephesians 2.1-10. Talks about. We are saved by grace. We don't deserve it. We can't earn it. We can't buy it.

But God in his mercy. Has sent Christ to die for us. And his mercy. That we are justified. And brought near to God. All because of God's grace.

The word peace. We often then skip past. Because peace is peace. And yes. You know. We know peace. But Paul being that kind of highly educated man.

[19:56] Uses the word. Uses the Hebrew word here. Shalom. Which has the concept of hope. Within it. Attached to it. So if in Ephesians 2.14. We read Christ.

We finally have peace. And our hope rests in him. Which is a reference back to Micah 5.5. The Roman word for peace. Is Pax Romana.

And this is understood by the Gentiles. As Roman dominance. A kind of a military dominance. If you are a Roman. You could walk anywhere. In the world basically. That was known at that point.

And no one would touch you. Out of fear. That's not what we're talking about here. And that's why Paul changes the word. Into the Hebrew shalom. Paul is saying here. That the peace is from the Lord.

And it's greater and better. Than anything Caesar can offer. And provide at that time. Paul is giving the Philippians. And us. That perfect reminder. And summary of the Christian faith.

[20:53] Encompassed in two words. Grace and peace. Grace. For our father in heaven. Through what his son did on the cross. Gives us that grace.

And that peace. In Philippians. We move on. In Philippians 3 to 5. We have the joy of prayer. Paul's focus is always towards God.

In the same way as Jesus was. He could not do anything. Unless I saw my father doing it first. So even the Lord's prayer. Teaches us to honor the father. First of all.

Above all things. We are to love the Lord our God. And we are not to have any other gods. But him. Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. So Paul gives thanks.

To God. For the church. To God. For the church. The body of Christ in Philippi. Paul prays with joy. And he says. You know. How often he prays.

[21:48] For them. Praise to the father. And it got me thinking. How often do we pray. For each other here in church. How often do we pray. For the churches in the city. How often do we pray.

For Calvary Chapel. How often do we pray. To the father. For the individuals. In the church. Do we pray with joy. Because of the fellowship we have.

Because we stand together. For Christ. Because we share our lives. With Christ. For good. For the bad. And for the ugly. I feel a Clint Eastwood quote. Coming on here.

That probably dates my age. Really thinking about it. Might move on from there. We walk with each other. We strengthen each other. We challenge each other. As we walk with Christ.

In partnership. With the gospel. Paul in Philippians 1.10. Kind of shifting on a little bit. But we'll come back. Tells his dear friends. That he prays. That the fellowship of their faith.

[22:44] May become effective. Through knowledge. Through knowledge. And discernment. Of every good thing. Which is in you. For Christ's sake. And he says.

And he says. He prays this. With much joy. It's a covenant partnership. So it's important. To the heart of God. He created us.

To be in partnership. With him. That's the whole point. Of Adam and Eve. Right at the very beginning. In partnership. That he could walk with them. In the garden of Eden. There was that partnership. Whether it was.

Christ sending his apostles. Out in twos. Or the Lord. Creating a partner for Adam. Which he just said. In Genesis 2.8. Or Moses. Partnering with Aaron. To lead the Israelites.

Out of Egypt. In Exodus 4. Or David. Needing partnership. With the tribal elders. Or David. Needing partnership. With Baruch. Sorry.

[23 : 39] Jeremiah. Needing partnership. With Baruch. In Jeremiah 36. And so many more. We are created to be. In partnership. Rarely did Paul minister. On his own.

He needed partners. To minister. What the Lord had given him. This partnership. Or fellowship. Is at the heart. Of the Trinity. Jesus said.

There is nothing. That he can do. Unless he sees his father. Doing it first. As I've said. Which is John 5. 19. One of Jesus' final prayers. In the Garden of Gethsemane.

Is not my will. But your will be done. Showing that total unity. Within the Trinity. And it should be. And it was his prayer. Also.

As Paul. Did his ministry. Why? So that the world. May believe. So the world. May believe. In John 17.

[24 : 37] 21 to 22. In other words. For the sake of the gospel. This is why. When church leaders fall. Or churches split.

It is so serious. And so sad. Because it dishonors Christ. As it tries to divide Christ. And we know what Paul says. In 1 Corinthians. 1.13.

Where he says. May it never be. May it never be. We're called to be one. In Christ. The partnership. The oneness. In Christ. Rooted in the word.

Filled with the Holy Spirit. Makes us full of joy. Regardless of what the world is doing. And that joy. And that peace. Makes us stronger together. As we see the gospel.

Then reach our cities. And our towns. Around us. Even the city of Southampton. The early church knew this. And they practiced it. As we read in Acts 3.

[25 : 32] That they devoted themselves. To fellowship. That they devoted themselves. To the breaking of bread. That they devoted themselves. To prayer. That they devoted themselves. To the apostles teaching. Partnership is about relationship.

First with the Lord. And then with each other. The principle. Of the men's group. We've got the forge. Is based on Proverbs 27. 17. In iron sharpens iron.

That one man sharpens another. Or the ladies group. That is coming up this Saturday. In the orchard. The principle in John 15. That no branch can bear fruit. By itself.

Unless it remains in the vine. And we are the branches. We first need the Lord. Because he is the root. And from the root. All the goodness comes. We can't do anything.

Unless we're in the root. Or we have the root. With each other. Verse 4 tells us. How this partnership works. And verse 5 tells us. Why? Verse 4. How?

[26 : 28] Through prayer. Paul underlines the importance of communication with God. Any relationship that we have depends upon communication. And that's why prayer is so important.

And so full of joy. Prayer is the engine room you might say. Of our Christian journey. It's not something we do. Five minutes before we go to bed and collapse. And go. Oh Lord.

The day's over. And then we're off. Snoring our heads off as it were. Though many of you might not. But anyway. It's that active engagement. Of communication with the Almighty.

And it's that sense of joy. And peace. And unity. We have with God. That gift he has given us. To actively engage. With the Lord himself.

It's where. You know. Prayer meetings. Should be packed. With people. Packed with people. Full of excitement. Full of expectation. Of what the Lord is going to be doing. It should be the most popular meeting.

[27 : 27] In a church. And if I can recommend anything. Is to read a book by Rhys Howells. I know some people. Have read it. Called The Intercessor. And it's a man. Who's come out of the Welsh revival.

In South Wales. And through two world wars. And he was renowned. For his emphasis on prayer. And the costly identification. With the heart of God. It is an incredible book.

If you read it. As we move on to Philippians 5. And this is the joy of sharing the gospel. Because this is always where Paul is going. And again.

Why? Because of this partnership. That they have with the gospel of Christ. That they're not distracted. By the things of this world. It's so easy isn't it? If you flick through the news.

Or talk to your neighbors. You can get distracted by the things around us. But Paul and his companions. And the church in Philippi. Their priority. Was the Great Commission.

[28 : 25] Sharing the good news with friends. Families. Colleagues. People at work. Whatever it might be. And we are. We are called to be in this world. But not of this world.

And that is a huge challenge to me. How do you separate those two things? As we journey. In John 17. 16. Is what it says. The sole purpose. That fills Paul's heart.

Is this heart with pure joy. To have not only fellowship with one another. But that deep fellowship. And that deep unity. In Christ. So that. The gospel can be preached.

So that. The whole world. May know. That Christ was the Messiah. Paul is calling the church. In Philippi. Partners. That's quite a big term.

He's calling them partners. Few churches stuck with Paul. Over time. But the Philippians did. And when things were going well. All is good. But when they get tough.

[29 : 23] The message that Paul is in prison. People then worry. And they leave. They're more concerned about their reputation. They're standing in society. Being caught associated with.

And therefore. Themselves. And they're standing. In the world. Becomes more important. Than their standing. With Christ. In Philippians.

Six to eight. We have this joy. Of faith. In the Lord. The one who will complete. The good work. That he began. In you. When he called you initially.

To the very end. And Paul refers here to. Two theological principles. Justification. Justification. And sanctification. We are justified.

Through faith. By what Christ did on the cross. Therefore. God declares. That we are guilty. Filthy. Rotten sinners. And by what Christ did on the cross. We are righteous.

[30 : 19] End of. Can't do anything else. Sanctification. Is what is. What Paul is directly. Referring to here. Is the assurance. That. What God began.

In each one of us. On day one. He will fulfill. When Christ returns. Again. That. That. That day. Of salvation. Is our justification. But the work.

Of the Holy Spirit. In each of us. Refining us. For his purposes. That transformation. That. That confirmation. Into.

The image. Of Christ. Is what we are referring to. When we are talking about. Sanctification. That we are made perfect. In him. Until Christ returns. And throughout history.

Our lives. Will go through. There is often trials. And there is. Adversity. Adversity. I can't say the word. Adversities. No. I can't say. You know what I mean. Even seasons of waiting.

[31 : 14] It is gone now. Completely. To allow. That refiner's fire. To shape us. And to mold us. So that our old character. Dies away. And the new.

Person. In Christ. Will shine forth. I love that image. Of. The. The silversmith. And how you purify silver. That you have got this pot. Of silver.

And you heat it up. And as it cools. A little bit. All the impurities. And scum. Come to the top. And you skim that off. And then you heat it again. And let it cool a little bit. And you skim.

Those off. And you keep repeating the cycle. Until eventually. The image of the refiner. Is seen like a mirror. And therefore the image of God. Is seen in us.

As it were. That's there. In 1 Thessalonians 5. 1. 11. Paul. Reassures Christians. That God will continue. His transformative work. In their lives.

[32 : 08] Until that day. The day of the Lord. Which Amos used first. Or the day of Jesus Christ. A day. When salvation. Is complete.

A day. Of the final judgment. A day. When the source. Of all comfort. And hope. Returns. Paul is holding. His children. And he refers to them.

As his children. The partakers. Of grace. This part of the body. Of Christ. In his heart. And again. How often. Are we holding. Family members.

Or people we know. At work. In our hearts. Just one. Or two people. That we are there. Each day. Because. You see. We're all on a kind of a. A self-improvement journey. As it were.

But the self-improvement journey. With the Lord. Has a hundred percent. Success rate. Whereas the worldly. Self. Improvement journey. Programs. A. Cost you a lot of money. And probably don't do you.

[33 : 02] A lot of good. At the end of it. Whereas this one's free. So that's even better. Our self-improvement journey. Though. Is not. By anything. We can do. Because in Zechariah 4.6.

As you know. It says. That it's not by. Our power. Or by our might. But by his spirit. Says the Lord. And this is. Should be a real. Encouragement for us. Because I don't know about you.

But I'm rubbish. At making myself. Better. And adhering to various things. So you know. When we feel stuck. Or we're feeling. Kind of. Left behind. Or you know.

Whether we are. Building a temple. Or trying to build a church. Whatever it might be. That the. The. We need the resources. And the strength. To push on in Christ.

And. And the Lord is there. With. By his grace. By his power. By the peace. He gives us. In every situation. In life. So often. We think. That we can help God out.

[33 : 57] Don't we? That we can do it. A little bit better. We can do it. In our own strength. We can use our own resources. Our own money. Whatever it might be. And sometimes. He lets us do that. And says.

Go on. Sue Adams. He will quite often. Bring us back on. To the path. That he wants. To ensure. His sovereign will is done. I mean. If you think about Abraham.

You know. After waiting so long. He thought he would. That he thought that the Lord. Was being a bit slow. In. In upholding his promise. For a child. So. He decided to kind of.

Help. Poor. Oh God out. And that didn't go. Particularly. Well. Should we say. And our life is. Is fulfilled. With God's purposes. Through us.

By his spirit. Through obedience. To him. And this should fill us. With great joy. And confidence. In verse seven. Paul is still in prison. And his deep love.

[34 : 52] In his heart. For the church. Why? Because they're partakers. Of grace. And therefore bringers. Of true peace. The shalom. Of God. The father.

And the Lord Jesus Christ. Through the defense. And confirmation. Of the gospel. And this is Paul's priority. Because it is the eternal. Hope. And joy. For every man.

Or woman. Who lives on this planet. And the last section. Verses nine to eleven. That Paul. Brings us to here. Is the joy of righteousness. Through Christ.

There is a depth. Of prayer here. A spiritual. Bond. Between the apostle Paul. And the body of Christ. Is in Philippi.

Like we saw in Ruth one. That Simon was preaching about. Where Ruth clings. To Naomi. And says those famous words. Where you go. I go. Where you sleep. I sleep.

[35 : 47] You shall be my people. Sorry. Your people will be my people. And your God. My God. In Ruth one sixteen. And Paul. Being a Jew. Is binding himself.

To Gentiles. Those Gentiles. Who've rejected. Their false gods. And follow. Paul's God. The God of Abraham. Isaac. And Jacob.

The God and father. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ. Christ. And we all know. The two greatest commandments. As we know. The story of the rich man. And Jesus. Has that conversation with him.

In Matthew. 22. That is to love the Lord. Your God. And to love your neighbor. And he says.

Everything is built upon. Those two commandments. Which is why.

It is so heartbreaking. When Christians. Fall. Out over. Maybe some trivial doctrine. Or leaders fall. Due to a sin. Love here.

[36 : 44] In verse 9. Is not some weak. Common love. That you just kind of throw away. But it's a deep love. That is based on truth. Knowledge.

And real discernment. Concerning the things that are unseen. And yet are very real. It's a love. That humbles us. That allows us.

To be held accountable. Not just leaders. But everyone. Accountable to the Lord. First. And disciplined. By the work of the Holy Spirit. In us.

But also accountable. To each other. But verse. But in verse 9. Kind of what does knowledge. And discernment. Have to do. With love. I suppose it's the opposite.

To blind love. That you just walk into any situation. Ignoring the advice of others. Pursuing the person. Or the career. Or the possession. Blind to whatever the future consequences.

[37 : 39] Might be. And this is at the heart. Of what we see. God. Sorry. This is at the heart. Of God. And we see it. In the Old Testament scriptures.

Where the prophets had basically. One single purpose. To bring the people. Back into relationship. Back into partnership. To bring Israel. Back into. That deep love.

And deep partnership. With God. And we see it again. In the New Testament. Through the Gospels. And the writings. That the message. Is to repent. To believe.

And the heart. And joy. Of that relationship. That we then get with God. Is sealed. So the message. Of the whole Bible. Is basically the same. It's just written. In different contexts.

To different people. At different times. Paul is writing. To a church. Saying. If we see someone. Who is engaged. In some kind of sin. And we fail. To challenge that person.

[38 : 34] Or challenge that behavior. And we just. Love them. For who they are. Then what good is that? In 1 Corinthians 5. 1. Paul addresses.

The church. In Corinth. Stating. There is immorality. Amongst you. Such that's not even seen. By the pagans. And yet. They boasted.

About their tolerance. They boasted. About. Inclusion. As a people. Who accepted. Regardless of their. Continued sin. And their lifestyle. Does that not sound. Familiar to us today? In 1 Corinthians 5.

6. Paul states. That a little bit. Of sin. Or leaven. Can permeate. The whole church. As they head down. A road of destruction. You see.

Love abounding. In knowledge. And discernment. When the woman. Is caught in adultery. And is brought before Jesus. He shows her grace. He shows her forgiveness. He shows her love.

[39 : 29] But then he says. Go and sin no more. And it's those both sides of the coin. That we need to have. Accountability is a balance. Between loving someone.

And helping someone. By encouraging them. In not sinning anymore. In the same way. As if you go into hospital. And the surgeon.

Just pats you on the back. And says. There there. It will be all okay. When actually. What they need to do. Is get a knife. And cut you open. And take whatever it is out. I'd much prefer them. Do that bit. Than tell me. Everything's going to be okay.

And I walk out. I might feel better. For the first five minutes. But long term. I'm not going to. Why does Paul mention. Knowledge and discernment. Because we must seek the things.

That are good for us. That is. Proves. A good character. That keeps us sincere. And blameless. Until Christ's return. We seek out healthy.

[40 : 24] Conversations. We're careful about what we watch. And what we hear. That doesn't lead us into sin. We listen to music. That makes us closer to the Lord. And fills up with joy. In verse 10.

It tells us why this is important. So that we approve things that are excellent. And remain sincere and blameless. Until the day of Christ. That we understand what reality.

What really matters in life. What is important. That we uphold those high levels of moral integrity. That we live in a way that pleases God.

A good measure of how well we are doing. Is to look at how we use our time. Day in. Day out. And what our priorities are in life.

Since we follow Christ. Since we have faith in him. Since we are born again by his spirit. We have been filled with the righteousness of God. Galatians 5 tells us.

[41 : 25] 5.22-23. Therefore Jesus says. I and my father. Will come and make our home in you. John 14. That.

I can't comprehend that. That the Lord actually lives within each of us. And goes through our days together. As we grow to be more like Jesus.

The more people see the fruit of the spirit moving through us. The works on transforming our mind. Our character. Our sense of purpose. Paul is writing this letter to the church in Philippi.

And to us today. Because he wants us to grow in love. He wants us to grow in grace. He wants us to have peace. He wants us to be molded. To be refined.

He wants us to have the experiences. That the Lord wants us to have. He wants us to be shaped by his word. Transformed by his spirit that lives within us. And this has to be our aim.

[42 : 21] As the body of Christ. In Calvary here in Southampton. That we need to push forward. To apprehend the work of Christ. In Philippians 3.

Because Paul counts everything to be lost. As long as he can obtain Christ in the end. His aim. As should be ours.

Is to push on in the things in Christ. To grow. To be more like him. To abound more and more. In his love. Not a blind love. To be built up in knowledge and discernment.

To be sincere. And not hypocritical. So that we don't stumble. As we wait for the day of Christ. And as the band returns.

I just want to finish with. You know. When he comes. I mean. We don't know when. But I want to be ready. I don't want to be found. In sin.

[43:19] In sin. In disobedience. In disobedience. And I don't think anybody here does. That's why we have a deep sense of joy. And peace. That the world simply can't understand.

People at work don't understand. Why I have this. This joy. In this peace. When they can see what's going on. In the world. But I also think it's why.

More and more young people in particular. Are coming to church. Why more and more people. Are buying the Bibles. Because they don't see that in the world. And there's a desire in them too. The world can't understand.

They don't understand this. Because they don't know the source. Of our hope and joy. Which is the Lord. This is why it's so important. That we partner with the Lord.

To share this priceless. Precious gift. That he has given us. With everyone we meet. Amen.