

Series: Divine Joy

C. R. B. C. 11-19-17

“The Joy of Partnership”

**Introduction:** We began a new series last week in the book of Philippians and highlighted the difference between happiness and “divine joy.” Joy can only be obtained through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul had encountered Jesus on the Damascus Road, and therefore, he had experienced true joy in his life. Today we continue along the same idea and uncover more of an understanding of why Paul had such a deep love for the church at Philippi.

*First let’s notice that Paul had a Solid Confidence.*

### **I. A Solid Confidence (vs. 6)**

- a. Man can disappoint, but God never fails
- b. Paul’s confidence was not in the church per se, rather his confidence was placed in God who had saved the people who made up the Philippian church.
- c. The verb used for “am confident” actually refers to a settled persuasion of mind that was the continuing result of a crisis decision in the past.
- d. There is no greater crisis in an individual’s life than when they determine where they will spend eternity. Paul made the decision on the Damascus Road, Lydia, the Philippian jailor, and the demon possessed girl had made their crisis decision as well.
- e. Paul had witnessed wonderful growth in the Philippian church.
- f. **Quote:** “The apostle could see plenty of proof that they were soundly saved. Their outward good works were evidence of the inward good work begun in their hearts by the Holy Spirit.” (John Phillips, *Exploring Ephesians and Philippians*, Pg. 33-34)
- g. Paul was encouraged every time he thought of the Philippian church because He understood that it was God who had started the work—and God would see it through to completion.
- h. **Illustration:** The American painter, John Sargent, once painted a panel of roses that was highly praised by critics. It was a small picture, but it approached perfection. Although offered a high price for it on many occasions, Sargent refused to sell it. He considered it his best work and was very proud of it. Whenever he was deeply discouraged and doubtful of his abilities as an artist, he would look at it and remind himself, "I painted that." Then his confidence and ability would come back to him. (Bits & Pieces, September 19, 1991, p. 9.)
- i. Remember that Paul was writing this letter from a prison cell. Looking through bars, Paul was filled with joy because his confidence in the Philippian church was rock solid, a work which was initiated by God and would be completed by Him.

Secondly, let's note *A Sincere Compassion*

## II. A Sincere Compassion (vs. 7)

- a. Paul was often separated geographically from his beloved spiritual children. This was especially the case with the church at Philippi.
- b. **Quote:** “There can be no greater or more exhilarating joy than that produced by deep, abiding, and genuine affection for others. (John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Philippians*, Pg. 30)
- c. The Philippian church had stood with Paul, they had supported him financial and with their prayers and because of that, Paul possessed a love for them that was deep and wide.
- d. **Quote:** “The Philippians had Paul in their hearts, and he had them in his heart as well—and that is probably the secret of Paul’s astonishing prayer life. Whom do we pray for the most? Those we love the most. Which prayer list most readily stirs us to pray? The one we have in our hearts.” (John Phillips, *Exploring Ephesians and Philippians*, Pg. 35)
- e. **Quote:** “The extraordinary depth of his affection rests in the fact that he held them in his heart. This was not a casual aside, as we so often glibly refer to our hearts as a vague pleasantry. Paul had no hearts on his underwear! He never mailed a pink valentine. Paul truly meant he had all of them in the very center of his being, the source of his physical and inner life—his thought processes and emotions and will—the center of his consciousness.” (Kent Hughes, *Preaching the Word: Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*, Pg. 33)
- f. **Quote:** “Compassion can’t be measured in dollars and cents. It does come with a price tag, but that price tag isn’t the amount of money spent. The price tag is love.”—J. C. Watts Jr.
- g. It is easy to love those who visibly express their love for us
- h. If the love of Christ compels us to love others, we should leave no room for doubt. Paul lived life this way, especially in regards to his relationship with the Philippian Church.
- i. **Illustration:** After the battle of Gettysburg, a soldier was found dead upon the field, holding in his hand the picture of three small children. No clue to his name could be found. In the terrors of battle, he had comforted himself with this picture. It was published, and by this means the children were found in a village of Western New York. Even so do faithful ministers carry the souls of their converts with them wherever they go. (Biblical Illustrator Database)

Finally, let's note *A Shared Cause*

## III. A Shared Cause (vs. 7-8)

- a. Paul and the Philippian church had a common cause, lifting high the blood stained banner of Jesus Christ!
- b. They were united in defense of the gospel—the word used here is the Greek word from

which we derive the word Apologetics from. Apologetics is simply the study of or defense of the gospel. Paul and the Philippian church were committed to standing in defense of the gospel.

c. Death could not deter them, they stood their ground, they would not cower before a Roman Emperor, for their allegiance resided in a King far greater than any emperor could aspire to be.

d. **Quote:** “The Philippians were Paul’s partners in his defense. They were partakers of his grace. The same things that motivated Paul, motivated them. The issues that swung in the balance affected them as well. They knew the pragmatic importance of Paul’s case receiving a favorable hearing, and they knew the verdict could go either way.

Persecution or protection for the church of God was at stake. The Philippians stood solidly with Paul. Perhaps the fact that these citizens of a Roman colony were convinced of the rightness of Paul’s cause might carry some weight in high places. If so, well and good; if not, the apostle’s Philippian friends were prepared for the consequence. Paul had already shown them the Christian way to take public beatings, injustice, prison, and mob hate.” (John Phillips, *Exploring Ephesians and Philippians*, Pg. 36)

e. Preaching/teaching the gospel is only one side of the gospel coin, the other side requires that we flesh out what we preach/teach, for if we do not, we are nothing more than heretics

f. Paul had “Divine Joy” because he shared the cause of life and faith with the Philippian church. When we share the cause of life and faith, God is glorified and the church is blessed!!!