

# Living Water Fellowship

18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023

COME TO JESUS

**OPENING SONG:** Only a Holy God

**WELCOME & PRAYER:**

GROW IN HIS GRACE

**BIBLE READING:** Philippians 1:1-11

<sup>1</sup> This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God's holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the church leaders & deacons. <sup>2</sup> May God our Father & the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace & peace.

<sup>3</sup> Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. <sup>4</sup> In all my prayers, I make my requests for all of you with joy, <sup>5</sup> for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. <sup>6</sup> And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

<sup>7</sup> So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favour of God, both in my imprisonment & in defending & confirming the truth of the Good News. <sup>8</sup> God knows how much I love you & long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> I pray that your love will overflow more & more, & that you will keep on growing in knowledge & understanding. <sup>10</sup> For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure & blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. <sup>11</sup> May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ— for this will bring much glory & praise to God.

**CHILDREN'S TIME:**

**BIBLE READING:** Philippians 1:12-30

<sup>12</sup> I want you to know, my dear brothers & sisters that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News. <sup>13</sup> For everyone here, including the whole palace guard, knows that I am in chains because of Christ. <sup>14</sup> And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers here have gained confidence & boldly speak God's message without fear.

<sup>15</sup> It's true that some are preaching out of jealousy & rivalry. But others preach about Christ with pure motives. <sup>16</sup> They preach because they love me, for they know I have been appointed to defend the Good News. <sup>17</sup> Those others do not have pure motives as they preach about Christ. They preach with selfish ambition, not sincerely, intending to make my chains more painful to me. <sup>18</sup> But that doesn't matter. Whether their motives are false

## Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Philippians 1:1-30. What strikes you as you read these verses? What questions come to mind?
2. What "last thing" do you want to say to the people you care about? Why? When do you plan on saying it?
3. Paul says the Philippians are his partners in the gospel. What might he mean? How does Paul explain his exceedingly positive perspective toward them? How might God's grace help someone suffer for, defend & confirm the gospel?
4. Paul desires the Philippians' love to abound more & more as they grow in knowledge & discernment. How might a lack of those character traits hinder their abounding in love?
5. vs 16 could also be translated to read that Paul has been "put here" (in Rome's prison) to defend the good news. Who do you think Paul would say "put him there"? Do you believe Paul is correct? If he's right, what does that say about how God accomplishes his intent that all people encounter the good news of Jesus? What does that imply about the places you find yourself over the course of your week?
6. In vs 19, why would Paul need the help of the Spirit of Christ in his current situation? What else does he rely on in his current circumstances? Who are people in your life, like the Philippians for Paul, whom you rely on to pray for you?
7. Paul expects to get out of prison. What 2 ways does he think that could occur? Which does he prefer? Why? What might it look like for Paul to honour Christ in life? In death? What does vs 21 (*living means living for Christ, & dying is even better*) mean?
8. What about Paul's experience of Christ allows him to prioritize the Gospel & Christ's honour above his own well-being? What guarantees does he have from Christ? How does Paul's assurance also echo yours?
9. Think again about the situations God has "put" you in. Where do you find yourself afraid to speak the word? What do you need to do to change that?
10. How does it affect you to know that Christ understands, by personal experience, what you are going through when you suffer for the gospel? Has serving Christ in the gospel ever caused you to experience Jesus more intimately?
11. What changes do you need to make to your lifestyle to demonstrate that boldly sharing the gospel & living for Christ's honour are your primary objectives in life?

or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice. <sup>19</sup> For I know that as you pray for me & the Spirit of Jesus Christ helps me, this will lead to my deliverance.

<sup>20</sup> For I fully expect & hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honour to Christ, whether I live or die. <sup>21</sup> For to me, living means living for Christ, & dying is even better.

<sup>22</sup> But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don't know which is better.

<sup>23</sup> I'm torn between two desires: I long to go be with Christ, which would be far better for me. <sup>24</sup> But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live.

<sup>25</sup> Knowing this, I am convinced that I will remain alive so I can continue to help all of you grow & experience the joy of your faith. <sup>26</sup> And when I come to you again, you will have even more reason to take pride in Christ Jesus because of what he is doing through me.

<sup>27</sup> Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come & see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing together with one spirit & one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News. <sup>28</sup> Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself. <sup>29</sup> For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. <sup>30</sup> We are in this struggle together. You have seen my struggle in the past, & you know that I am still in the midst of it.

#### FAITH CHAT:

1. Where & when do you experience joy?
2. Share 2 things for which you are thankful?

**THE MESSAGE:**        *THE PANDEMIC OF JOY: THANKFUL JOY*

**OFFERING SONG:**        Jesus Strong and Kind

#### PRAYERS:

#### THE COMMUNION:

*The Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:*

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

*Worship during Communion:*

*VIDEO – O COME TO THE ALTAR (Elevation Worship) - CCL Licence 384660*

## *GO IN HIS POWER*

#### THE BLESSING:

**(Name), † child of God...  
Christ at work in you is joy for today.  
Christ in you as his church is joy forever.  
Amen.**

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

#### SONG:

How Deep the Father's Love

## *SHOW HIS LOVE*