

KINGS NORTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 27th February 2022 10 am

New series - The church at Philippi

Welcome to all

Opening Scripture

Hymn MP 237 Holy Holy Holy

Scripture Dt 6:13-25 (page 186)

Prayer

Children's talk 'Rubbish' (Hey tract)

Chorus MP 30alt. Alleluia give thanks to the risen Lord

Sharing time, Ina move & testimony, Fauzia move,

BMS powerpoint Ukraine

Prayer

Notices HG at 33 WHR, members mtg, Ukraine,
BCM prayerletter, Sleepout.

Hymn MP 315 I will sing the wondrous story

Reading Philippians 1:1,2 (p.1178)

Sermon The church at Philippi

Hymn MP 31 Amazing Grace

Closing Prayer:

Close _____

Welcome and pray

Open the Bible - any page - do so, where did you land? What can you see? Whatever it is – it is important, yes important for you - now in 2022 and for you in particular. Why can I say that? The Bible is God's living word, words from God to his creation - to all men and women - it is always relevant.

✚ This is how you show that you love God - by acting on what you read

Now open the Bible at Philippians 1 (p.1178) It is equally important and useful to me. **Read 1:1-2**

We have finished working through the pastoral epistles Timothy and Titus. This new series will take us through the letter to the church at Philippi. It has important things to say to all of us here this morning.

Today we are going to look at the first two verses. Yes, it is quite right to ask: Who was writing? Who was he writing to? Why was he writing? What is he saying? Where is Philippi. What is there to know about Philippi?

Background is important but this is not a sermon on background, I will give some, however for the most part it will surface as it applies to what we read in each section of the letter.

Let us start by asking how the letter fits into the Bible as a whole?

■ OT, NT, Acts, Letters, Rev PPT

■ Philippi PPT, Macedonian call Acts 15, the 1st church in Europe,

1 Paul and Timothy,

Though it was Paul the Apostle who alone was divinely inspired, he humbly joins young Timothy with himself, honouring Timothy his co-worker.

servants of Christ Jesus,

Here is the great Apostle, he doesn't point people to the letters after his name, He does not point to his long list of qualifications and achievements, of which he had many, no he describes himself as a **servant**, the word used also means **slave**. He is subservient to the will of his master Jesus Christ. Paul is not the masters of the churches, Jesus Christ is. Paul as Jesus' servant is thus the servant of the church. So it is for every minister, I am here to give my time and energy to serve you. x2 the church here in KN.

To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi

Paul is not writing to everyone in the city but to a certain people; **the saints**

So if this letter came to you - pass it on?, if you are a saint it is for you!

Here they are called **saints**. This sounds archaic language. As Chris mentioned saints does not refer to some elevated hero portrayed in the stained glass of Europe's cathedrals, no a 'saint' is the title of every true believer. 'saint' is from the word 'sanctified'. The word is Hagios and it denotes sacred, pure, morally blameless, consecrated, it is usually translated as Holy, and means 'set apart' x2. **Like being called up to join the army** Heb 12:14 says: **without holiness no-one will see the Lord.** x2

In the OT the only people who were to approach God were the priests. They could do so because they were purified, set apart / made Holy for that.

Those who were not holy were unable to approach God. Indeed when they tried to do so they were struck down Lev 9,10.

Don't think that because you believe in God, believe that he is there, that it is the same as knowing Him, being accepted by Him, drawing close to Him.

Just knowing the Queen is there - does not give you access to her

As we saw with the OT priests the only way to God was past the altar of sacrifice. Now the only way to God is past / or through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, the place where the guilt of my sin was taken away.

The priests I mentioned were appointed to the position – they could not just decide to become a priest. So in the same way no-one naturally decides to set themselves apart for God, they cannot do so – nor do they want to. It is a calling, but a calling with such power that when it comes it cannot be resisted.

■ **Like the powerful winds we have been having**

It is known as 'irresistible Grace' because God is behind it. Have you had that call? He calls everyone – everyone here – that is a general call to all people. But he is also specific – there is a specific call – to you - is that you? how can you tell? – because that person responds. Have you heeded His Call? Some here have – some here have not.

The call it from Jesus, and the purpose is to be set apart - for Him.

The letter was addressed **To all the saints in Christ Jesus**

Some are called to the Bar, some are called to the army, some are called to be a nurse but a call from Jesus Christ is a call to **share his holiness**. No-one can come to a Holy God without Holiness, as Heb 12:14 says: **without holiness no-one will see the Lord.** x2

2a

And who has holiness? Do you? Are you able to know God as you are? NO. Some say 'God has done this or that for me' – and it is said as if God is pleased with them and everything between them and God is hunky dory. Yes God is good to you - because God is good, he is good to all - even those who refuse the Lordship of his son - he is good to all.

To know God and be heaven-bound I need to be changed. Heaven is special because the Lord is there. It is a Holy place for God is Holy and therefore anyone to be heaven-bound needs to be Holy.

Paul said to the church in Corinth: **Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were.**

Yes that is what we were: swindlers, immoral, greedy, drunkards, But Jesus Christ changed us, he has change me, he has turned me around and given me a hatred of what I once loved - and I now love the one I had – through my conduct - hated. It is a wonderful work of Grace, poured out with power.

He continues: **But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."** 1Co 6:9-11

No-one is fit for God, we need godliness, I don't have it so he gives it to me

This is grace, grace that comes through Jesus Christ. That is why he lived a perfect life and then gave that life up on the cross, - to satisfy God's anger against your sin x2. To the repentant he is willing to remove your sin and give you his righteousness – that is to be considered perfect in the sight of God.

✚ **It is God's undeserved favour given to all who will turn to Jesus.**

So don't think that 'sainthood' is in any way a result of personal character, some moral attainment, as if that person is in some way good. No, there are no 'good' people. Did you hear that? There may be in the eyes of man - but not in the eyes of God. No-one is good because everybody has broken God's law and is tainted with sin. no-one is good.

[To be good in the sight of God I need to be made good, - it cannot come from me – Jesus who was good, and he, the ultimate of good can give me his goodness. My fleshly nature can be overridden by Jesus' goodness - so in a sense I now have two natures. Me and Jesus in me.]

2b

- Chapels in hospitals once made are placed consecrated for Christian worship, so with churches. When this chapel was founded in 1847 it was consecrated as a place of Christian worship.

God calls and makes holy - the response is 'consecration' - Leviticus: **I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy.** Le 11:44

Ex 22:31 "**You are to be my holy people.**

De 28:9 **The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he promised**

Isa 62:12 **They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD;**

So when Paul writes to Christians he describes them as **God's holy people.**

Eph 5:3 and 2Th 1:10

We don't look different from others around: in our ethnicity, nationality, height, status, upbringing, intellectual prowess, shoe size etc, etc.

Paul is writing to *all the saints*, the richest, the poorest, the gifted, those less gifted. In Christ there's no difference; we all meet together in him. It is a level playing field, all are accepted only by virtue of being **in Christ Jesus**.

- ✚ **There are two types of people in this world, I don't mean men or women, but those without Jesus and those with Jesus.**

Everywhere, all around the world. So the phrase: **To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi**, could just as well say **To all the saints in Christ Jesus** in Kings Norton.

Did you notice that Jesus Christ is mentioned three times in these two verses

When I say Jesus Christ I should say 'Christ Jesus' is there a point in this?

Paul often uses Christ first for Jesus is risen to heaven and is now God on the throne. The point being we serve a risen Saviour who is seated on the throne in heaven..... he is the centre.

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

To *all the saints* he mentions the church – and notice all – God's word is to everyone – and he does so before the ministers, because the ministers are for the church – not the churches for the ministers. Ministers are not only the servants of Christ, but the servants of the church for his sake. 2Co 4:5.

God's house is an ordered house. Christ has ordained in his church two orders, two officers Elders and deacons. The Pastor is an elder. He has given us Elders and Deacons so as to strengthen the church for works of service,

we are here to be concerned for the welfare of each other in the church - and to be an example of Godliness to each other.

Elders primarily teach and rule, while deacons are given responsibility to oversee, guide, encourage the business of the house of God: the place, the furniture, the maintenance of the ministries, and provision for the poor.

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

That is why we have elders and deacons in this church and we could do with more elders and more deacons.

Pastors, Elders and deacons should set an example to others

- **A church building manager was heard to say, "The blower still works, but the fire has gone out." He was discussing a problem with the boiler, but the member who overheard him thought he was speaking about the pastor.** We must be zealous always zealous

There is a temptation to look at other churches to see how they do things, how many people there are, how the building looks, what the music is like – Sadly increasingly churches do not have elders and deacons.

- **BEC assessors in, HEBA 'health check' all about health and safety etc for us the Bible**

Saints are saved sinners, saved to serve. God's people are set apart for works of service on earth. It is the task of us all to spur each other on to love and do good works. Is it happening? That is one reason why we have an ordered and governed church. To equip God people for service and set an example. Examples of us serving.....

- **Arrange methodical outreach at least on one day a week as I suspect it is not happening.**
- **doing good by befriending those who are new, visiting those we can**

Finally the power - Christ never calls without giving His power.

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

2 Grace and peace to you - This is the same, almost word for word, in all the letters to the churches, *grace and peace* x2 Oh how we need this, Oh how the world needs this —Grace - the free favour and good-will of God, from a God who is now my Father and the fountain and origin of all blessings, **from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ**, Christ as Mediator is the

channel of all spiritual blessings to the church, and applies them directly to each of us who are His.

No peace without grace. Because real peace comes from God and is a result of His Grace.

✚ Real peace springs from knowing personal divine favour.

All this why? So we can be free to serve the Lord Jesus' purposes for you while in this world before you join him in heaven now he has finished his.

And what is that purpose? - What is the purpose of the church in the world?

To live under the Lordship of Christ - and as on the bulletin recently:

> to proclaim that Jesus is Lord, and call sinners to repentance.

What is the purpose of the church in the world?

Or as someone else has said the purpose of the church is:

To fulfil the Greatest Commandment - To fulfil the Great Commission

This letter to the Christians in Philippi can be summed up in this:

✚ That you may have "Joyful contentment as we serve Christ together"

Sadly the church there did not experience this joy - they had every reason to be joyful – this word occurs many times in the letter, they had every reason to be united in the gospel work to which they were called - but selfishness, one falling out with another, their own problems had taken over such that they lost their Joy. Why because they had taken their eyes off the Lord Jesus and his example. Hence the well known Chapter 2.

Destination heaven

True Christians are changed and know it, True Christians have their **names are in the book of life.**" Php 4:3. Christians are heaven-bound – and know it.

■ Airport a group amongst you suddenly get up to go

"But our citizenship is in heaven. x2 And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ," (Php 3:20 NIV)

The church of Christ on earth are those awaiting His return. We are Heaven-bound. Just as you have an airport, a seaport, even a space port, church is a heaven port, a place of preparation for departure to the new world.

However, the church of Christ on earth are not sitting in some departure gate, or transit lounge, No. Christ who has fitted us for heaven expects us to prepare ourselves for that day by good works now - our treasure in heaven.

How can we not do so when Christ so actively and lovingly did so for me.

You might ask how you can tell who is who in the church? Good question.

1. A Christians is someone who thinks differently, A Christian is one who has a different priority in their life, they seem to be interested in and serving someone who is invisible.
2. Go into a Christian home and you will find a peaceful place, a welcoming home. A modest home, the person does not spend his or her time feathering the nest. There may not even be a TV there, and if so it is not on much and when it is it is selective. In fact all of their possessions, home, car, clothes, phone will be modest, to suit a need.
3. You can tell a Christian because they are not worldly, they do not spend their time or attention on the latest things or today's movements. He or she guards their heart from being engrossed in anything in the world.
4. A Christians does not wile away the time but has work to do, he or she thinks of others and is active in helping.
5. A Christian is someone who is in control of him or herself. They speak words of grace and kindness, catch them under pressure or on the receiving end of someone's tongue and they remain patient and just as gracious in their response.
6. Simply put you can see a Christian because he or she is set apart x2, someone who loves Jesus Christ, loves Christ's people, loves his gospel, loves those around. Why, because he has Christ's love in his heart.

✚ If you are not really a saint on earth you will never be a saint in heaven.

We sang to start our worship: *Holy, holy, holy, All the saints adore Thee Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea.*

✚ Let us have that in mind – remember we are set apart for Christ – and therefore make the most of these short days here!

Amen

END