

10/30/26

In this week's episode of Chosen and Cherished, we continued our walk through the book of Philippians. We looked at what we could learn from a passage that is often passed over, the end of Philippians 2. If you normally listen to the podcast on Apple Podcasts, there were some glitches. Hopefully it will be up soon. But you can still listen on the church website. Here's the link… *https://summitpoint.org/chosen-and-cherished/*

Blessings,
Jonna

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

We're starting a new focus in the series, Kingdom Outpost, this next week. That is, Responsible Earthly Living. So, as a follower of Jesus Christ in this Kingdom Outpost, what does it look like to live responsibly? I shouldn't be surprised to see that it starts with love. God IS love. Of course His children would be called first and foremost to love.

Vs 9-10 ~ "Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more…"

Paul is actually using two different Greek words for love here. The first is phileo… brotherly love. Paul celebrated that these believers had a tender affection for each other. He also saw that their brotherly love was tied to the other word for love, agape love, that they'd been taught. Agape love is a supernatural, divine love from God. It infuses our brotherly love with even more commitment and depth because of God's sacrificial, unconditional, unfading, extremely tender love for us.

Paul saw that these believers were not only caring for each other in their Kingdom Outpost, but loving all the believers throughout Macedonia. That's a lot of miles of love being poured out. He urged, encouraged, exhorted them not to come to a point where they said, "We're done. We've given enough." He encouraged them to love as they had already loved, but more and

more!

How does someone obey the command to love more and more? We certainly can't muscle it. The only way to love like this with no limits is to focus on the love of God that has no limits. The more I let God love me by not avoiding Him or pushing Him away, the more He pours His love into my heart so that I have more to give. God's love for me never runs out, so my love for others will never run out when I'm letting His love be my motivation, as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:14, "For the love of Christ controls us." O Lord, please help me to see when I'm allowing anything other than Your love to rule my heart, and please help me to hand it to You so that You can replace the ashes that rule me with the beauty that comes from You.

What happens when I am truly letting the love of God rule my heart, both in brotherly affection and divine, supernatural, unconditional love? It affects the way I live.

Vs. 12-13 ~ Paul urges me to love more and more… "and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one."

Aspire to live quietly ~ Strive earnestly to be at peace. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 tells me how that peace comes. First, it starts with prayer. Pray for ALL people, from leader on down, "that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way." This is for a purpose, not just that we would have a comfortable and easy life, but that people would see our contentment in the Lord and our love for others that are not dependent on our circumstances, but on our relationship with Jesus. And because of what they see in us, they might come to know Jesus as well.

To mind our own affairs ~ Seek to accomplish what God has for me to do, and don't be a busybody getting into other people's business. Love them. Don't try to control them. Care for them. Don't condemn them.

Work with your own hands ~ When would someone NOT work with their own hands? When they think they're too good for the menial tasks God may call them to, or when they think they're too unworthy to have anything to offer, or they're too distracted to care. For those who think they're too good… Who can say that God owes them anything? It's interesting how many people say they feel the Lord is leading them to be a speaker or to write a book or whatever puts them in the limelight, but few say they feel called to clean bathrooms for the glory of God. But I think of our facilities staff at church. It's clear that they see their role as a ministry… and they serve with joy. It's awesome and inspiring to my faith.

For those who think they're not good enough… our sweet Lord gives value to every one of us. He has purpose for every one of us. No one is exempt.

For those who are too distracted to care… They're missing out on the joy of serving the Lord with willing hands.

I look at my own life and I see that I've been in all three categories. I want to say I haven't, but I see evidence in my life that I have. I praise the Lord that He's so gentle and patient and merciful, and that He continues to help me decrease while He increases in my life (John 3:30). I see Him gently and patiently helping me give up the inordinate desire for what's comfortable and easy and to realize that being with Him is what truly satisfies my soul. But Lord, You and I both know there's a lot more work to be done in my heart. Please help me to be a willing disciple. The more I give up the things that don't please You the more I learn how worthwhile it is to give up the things that don't please You.

As we learn to love each other more and more, and to live peaceful and devoted lives that please the Lord, we become an example to the world around us, that they might come to know the Lord, too. We're not responsible for their salvation, but we are responsible for how we live.

I see here that Paul's focus is ALWAYS on the gospel. He loved Jesus so much, and he was so full of God's love, that that he genuinely wanted heaven to be crowded. He wanted every believer to have the same mindset.

He ended this section by encouraging us "to be dependent on no one." Why? If I'm dependent on someone, if I'm placing my trust in another person to be my satisfaction or to meet all my needs, I will compromise my faith in the Lord to get them to be my God replacement. It's too much of a burden on them, and it doesn't end well for anyone.

We're called to walk side by side with each other in the faith of the gospel. Paul spoke of this in Philippians 1:27 when he called us to "stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel." Yes, stand with each other, but the one we are called to depend on is Jesus Christ. He is our answer.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths." And Jeremiah 17:5-8 speaks of how bad it goes when we put our trust in man and how well it goes when we put our trust in the Lord.

It is tempting to rely on people because we can see them. Hebrews 11:27 speaks of the faith of Moses who "by faith" was not afraid of Pharaoh, even though he was a mean, scary man. But it says, "for Moses endured as SEEING Him who is INVISIBLE." That's faith.

So Lord, by Your love, I pray that I will learn to love others more and more and be a light to the world around me. Let my faith and trust be in You alone as I walk side by side with other believers in the faith of the gospel. I know I can do this if I keep my eyes on You. May it be so.