Philippians 1

“I Have You In My Heart!”

I. INTRO:
A. Poem: One ship drives east & another drives west, With the selfsame winds that blow. Tis the set of the sails, And not the gales, Which tells us the way to go. [Ella Wheeler Wilcox]

1. Paul understood that joy doesn't depend upon circumstances, people, possessions, or worries. (ch.1,2,3,4)
2. It is an attitude that's determined by confidence in God.
   a) It’s this confidence in God that guided him like an inner compass, which always kept him on joy’s course...regardless of the storms that blew.
3. Q: Do you have that same inner confidence guiding you?
   a) Let Paul teach us how to put our confidence in God & set our sails for joy!

B. Book Overview: With Christ as our model of humility & service, you can enjoy a oneness of purpose, attitude, goal, & labor as a church.
1. Philippi is 1st church Paul founded in Macedonia. He’s writing almost 10 years after 1st trip to Philippi. The church is now established(elders & deacons).
2. It’s a tender letter to a group of friends close to Paul(not a theological treatise).
3. Purpose of letter: To acknowledge a $ gift from this church (sent Epaphroditus)
   a) A very generous church! Celebrates generosity. [1 of our Core Values: Stewardship]
4. Key verse: “For me to live is Christ, to die is gain!”
5. Key word: Joy! (16x’s joy/rejoice)
   a) He writes to express joy & encourage joy in his dear friends.
   b) Kaufmann Kohler states in the Jewish Encyclopedia that no language has as many words for joy and rejoicing as does Hebrew. In the OT 13 Hebrew roots, found in 27 different words, are used primarily for some aspect of joy or joyful participation in religious worship.
      (1) The psalmist says, Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fullness of joy, in thy right hand are pleasures forevemore (16:11)
   c) A letter of Joy must have been written by someone sunbathing on the Mediterranean right? No, from a Roman Prison.
   d) Joy is to be found in something more than good feelings & comfortable settings.
      (1) That something is someone! (21) [Oh, Jesus Christ is found 18x’s in ch1 alone]
II. **I HAVE YOU IN MY HEART!**

A. **THANKING!** (1-8)

B. (1) So when the Philippians *broke open the seal*, the 1st word they read was their beloved apostle’s name...“Paul!”

1. **He was to those 1st century Philippians,**…
   What Luther was to the German Christians in the 16th century.
   What Lincoln was to the African Americans in the 19th century.
   What Churchill was to the British in the 20th century…
   A respected *leader, teacher, & friend*.

C. (3) **Thanksgiving - Idea! A practical suggestion to help you cultivate the art of thanksgiving in your family.**

1. Have each member of the family contribute *once a month* by writing down things they feel especially **thankful** for. Then on Thanksgiving, make it a tradition to have everyone read what they’ve written & **give thanks** together as a family. (Chuck Swindoll)

D. (6) Good example of Jesus being our *Alpha & Omega*!

1. How sad when Christians depend wholly on *themselves*!

E. **PRAYING!** (9-11)

F. This is one of Paul’s prison prayers.

1. **Prison may cut off a man from men, but not from God! :)**
2. Paul’s prison privations did not *damp his faith*, nor *dull his hope*, nor *dim his love*. (Awake My Heart; Baxter)

G. (9) **That your love** - No one has simplified it better than Anna B. Warner...*Jesus loves me this I know, for the bible tells me so!*

H. (9b) Many have *knowledge*, but lack **discernment**.

1. **To guide their love, Paul prays for 2 things:** Full & complete knowledge on 1 side & a keen awareness of right & wrong on the other.

I. (10) It’s possible to be **wrong** but **sincere**; It’s also possible to be **right** but **insincere**!

1. The 1st is **deceived**; the 2nd is **playing games**!
2. **Being wrong but sincere** seems only to be acceptable in Religion???
   a) What would you think of the **sincere pharmacist** who gave you a deadly drug instead of your prescription?
3. To be right but insincere is the life of the hypocrite.
4. Sincere = tested by sunlight. (folk etymology, w/o wax used to cover statue flaws)

J. (11) Righteousness(right) - The world asks, “Is it popular?” “Will it make me feel better?” Or, Is it politically correct?”
1. The Christian must ask, “Is it right?” “Is it biblically correct?”

K. (11b) Which are by Jesus Christ - People can live normally good lives on a human level.
1. They can: “pay their bills, give to charity, help their neighbors, honor their commitments, abide by the law, even go to church!”
2. The difference lies in both Means & Motives!
   a) Christian goodness is not a matter of Degree, but of Kind!
3. A Christian’s righteousness will exceed that of the Scribes & Phar’s. (Mt. 5:20).
   a) Not necessarily in quantity but in quality!
   b) The difference is the Means. It is...by Jesus Christ!
      (1) The means of our goodness is not our own effort to copy His life, but His living in us! (swindoll)
      (2) It is supernatural, it is the result of a spirit filled life!
   c) It’s difference is the Motive. Our Motivation is The Glory & Praise of God!

L. Poem[2nd Stanza]: Like the winds of the sea are the ways of fate(?),
   As we voyage along through life:
   Tis the set of a soul That decides its goal,
   And not the calm or the strife. [Ella Wheeler Wilcox]

M. As you prepare to launch into the calm & strife of your day, set the course of your soul according to these 3 guiding principles from Paul: [Swindoll]
1. 1st, Confidence brings joy when you focus on the things for which you’re thankful! (3)
2. 2nd, Confidence brings joy when you let God be God! (6)
3. 3rd, Confidence brings joy when you keep love within its proper limits! (9)

N. Declaration of Independence: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.
1. If it’s our unalienable(can’t take away) right to pursue Happiness...why have so few found it? - Maybe because of the word pursuit? It suggests it’s outside of us, somewhere “out there” needing to be discovered or caught.
a) But it doesn’t come from **without** but from **within**!

b) It comes not from **outward circumstances** but from an **inner mind-set**.

c) Holocaust survivor **Viktor Frankl** wrote, “Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms - to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”

O. **Memorize Phil.4:8** Think of the **mind** like a **bank** that regularly receives deposits.

   1. By depositing the kinds of **thoughts** mentioned in **Phil.4:8**, we **build up & draw** on a rich account that will constantly yield a high dividend called **joy**!

P. **PREACHING!** (12-18)

Q. (16) **Not sincerely** - a precious metal mined with a basic alloy!

   1. These miners were mining the **pure gold** of the **gospel**, w/the **alloy** of their **jealousy**.

R. (18) Sometimes you can’t applaud their **motive**, but you only their **motion**...the gospel was moving forward!

   1. **Q:** Are you big enough to see God can use a preacher who’s decked in gold? Prancing the stage like a Peacock? Sweating his jacket crazy wet? Those preachers who have to put an “a” at the end of every **worda**!

   2. Maybe you see them building an empire for themselves. Some seem to not have a real conviction, opening their arms too wide embracing all.

   3. I once heard Robert Schuller give a near perfect gospel invitation at the end of his message. (besides 1 comment that God wants all to prosper) Dealt plainly with sin!

      a) Though I don’t like his robes, his voice, his smile, his views on prosperity & positive thinking, is it possible God uses his **gospel** for some to come to salvation?

S. **Read** what Paul wrote in **Galatians 1:6-9**.

   1. To the Galatians he says, “**let em be accursed**” to Philippians he says, “so what?” - One **condemnation**, the other **indifference**! {Contradictory???}

   2. **Nope!** To the **Galatians** he was denouncing those who **garble** the gospel of **grace** into a message of **works**...Anathema!!!

      a) To the **philippians**, he’s rejoicing that despite the **impure motives of some**, the good news of Jesus Christ is still being proclaimed **accurately**.

      b) **The message** matters most, not the **messenger**!

T. **Q:** Would you have used **Balaam** to convey a divine message for you? God did!

   **Q:** Would you have used **Caiaphas** (the puppet priest) as as prophet? God did!

   **Q:** Would you have used **Jonah** who had a miserable unforgiving spirit, bitter, narrow minded, & prejudice? God did!

   **Q:** Would you have blessed any of **David’s** Psalms after his adultery/murder? God did!
U. Paul had a single passion…The Gospel!
   1. He focused on Preaching not on the Preacher!

V. I rejoice, & will continue to rejoice - Q: What makes you Joyful?
   1. (Spurgeon) *Joy on the face is the result of the shining reflection of God in our hearts!*
      There are more flies caught with *honey* than with *vinegar*, and there will be more souls led to heaven by a man who wears *heaven* in his face than by one who bears *death* in his looks.

W. End: Joy always under construction!
   1. Most of us have experienced what happens to motorists when one of those huge *graders* goes to work on a highway repair job. When the machine is operating on a busy road, traffic is halted and the cars lined up in opposite directions are allowed to proceed alternately. A veteran operator of one of those big machines decided one day to try to relieve the tension that inevitably results from such a traffic backup. Consequently on both the *front* and *rear* of his grader a sign now appears, declaring, "*The Road to Happiness is Almost Always Under Construction.*"
      a) Jn.16:22 *Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you!*
   2. "*The Road to Happiness is Almost Always Under Construction.*"