



'Back to Basics for Believers Series'

Sermons in the Epistle to the Philippians

Message 25 – 'Grace and Glory'

Philippians 4:20 - 23

As Paul closes this letter, these final words seem to encapsulate the major themes and lessons that need to be heeded. He wants to impress upon his readers the important themes. They are full of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the glory of God. Those two things are essential to the believer as they are what it is all about. The grace of God through the Lord Jesus Christ is what saves us, and sets us apart, adopted into the family of God, recognised as saints. The glory of God is our whole motivation for living, the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

1. Paul Reminds them of the Importance of Sainly Character (saint...saints 4:21,22)

Quite simply a saint is a sinner saved by grace. Yet, within the term 'saint', that Paul uses, there is a key element that highlights what the character of the saint should be. You see, when saint is actually translated, it means 'set apart ones', 'separated ones', 'holy ones'. Holiness is an imperative desire of the saint saved by grace. God is holy, and His holiness is His complete and utter separation from sin. He is pure and true, and wholly without blemish. This is applied to the saint in the sense that they have been separated from sin unto God for holy purposes. How? In Christ Jesus! The reality of sainthood is only bestowed by the grace of God through the Lord Jesus Christ and His perfect life, and redeeming work on the cross, and the power of His resurrection.

2. Paul Reminds them of the Importance of Sainly Worship (v20)

Now, in this doxology, I think that this verse holds a significant truth for this current age. In the light of being called saints, saints are not to be worshiped, rather they are to be those who worship. Doxology when you break it down basically means a word about glory; it is an outburst that ascribes praise, glory and worship to God. I think that this is a very significant thing, whenever you come across a doxology in the Scriptures, it is a fitting response to doctrinal truth. As such we can see that true worship is always a response to, and should be a natural progression from divine truth. In this doxology that we have in Philippians, Paul defines who is the subject of the praise, 'our God'. The God whom Christians worship, the only true and living God. John 5:44 describes Him as the one and only God. The way in which Paul speaks of God, as 'our God' emphasises the beauty of the personal relationship that believers can have with Him. Notice that Paul also calls God the believer's Father. Then as Paul closes this aspect of the doxology by speaking of forever and ever. This indicates the duration of the believer's worship of God is eternity. We will as saints worship God for eternity in glory, and at this point, Paul can only say Amen.

3. Paul Reminds them of the Importance of Sainly Fellowship (v21-22a)

Paul repeats the word greet and by doing this, he underlines the strength of fellowship. His love for the believers at Philippi is evident throughout the letter. Yet, I like the way that Paul speaks of every saint, rather than all the saints, as it identifies the individual. It underlines the truth that every saint is worthy of his care and affection. Likewise, it must be the case in this fellowship. Every saint is worthy of care, there is to be no favouritism, no cliques, because if we are saints this night, then we are united in the body of Christ. A saint has been accepted through the Lord Jesus Christ, as such they must be accepted by the church of Christ. A saint is what he is by God's grace, and nothing more.

4. Paul Reminds them of the Importance of Sainly Joy (v22b)

Yet the point is this, that we experience real joy as a body of believers when we hear of a sinner coming to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is important that we have a desire to reach the lost, and also to rejoice when we hear of sinners being saved.

5. Paul Reminds them of the Importance of Sainly Sustenance (v23)

Finally, the very final words of this letter point the Philippians to the heart of the Gospel message. He begins with it, and now he ends with it, by speaking of grace. As believers, the things that we need above anything else is grace. The grace that comes from the Lord Jesus Christ is the only thing that can sustain us. Great grace is experienced by a believer when they come to know the Lord, it is unmerited, the undeserved favour of God on a sinner, that draws a person to redemption. A believer is saved by grace, but just as significant is the fact that they are sustained by grace. In addition one can also say that they are governed by grace, guided by grace, kept by grace, strengthened by grace, enabled by grace, sanctified by grace. The saint must constantly depend on the grace of God to provide for them forgiveness, comfort, peace, joy, boldness, and instruction. Where is this grace found? In Christ Jesus!

So, as we conclude this Epistle, this series, it is all about Jesus Christ, and we should be caught up with the pre-eminence, honour, and amazing glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our life; for believers in all ages He is their hope, their song, and their joy! May this great theme – the Lord Jesus Christ and his amazing grace – consume your thoughts, bless you, and may it be your portion until that great and glorious day when we shall see Him in all His glory.



Penzance Baptist Church

'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs