

# BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

## SERMON OUTLINE

By James M. Duncan, Pastor

**JANUARY 8, 2017**

**#-1 Series: Philippians – “Christ-The Believers Joy”**

### **“Fellowship Of The Gospel”**

#### **Philippians 1:1-5**

We are beginning a new series today from the Book of Philippians titled: **“CHRIST – The Believers Joy”** that I believe will also bring joy, hope and encouragement to all of us as we begin our journey for this New Year of 2017.

THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS is a challenging exposition pointing specifically to a church that had become what every church ought to be. As we read this book and feel the heart-throb of the Apostle Paul for these Philippians Christians, we realize how far short we come of being the kind of church we ought to be.

Now it seems to me that the four chapters of Philippians have provided more favorite quotes and sound bites than any other N.T. Book, at least that is my opinion. Some of my favorite verses are:

**Philippians 1:3; 2:5; 3:7,10,13-14; 4:4, 11, 13, 19**

The founding of the Philippian church is recorded in Acts 16. The Apostle Paul had come to Asia Minor by the leading of the Holy Spirit. The conversion of Lydia, the slave girl, and the jailer and his household—this was the beginning of the church at Philippi.

There are two keys to this letter. The first is the word "rejoice." "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice" (*Phil. 4:4*). The second idea, and the most interesting to me, is that there are about fifty references to Jesus Christ, and that makes for tremendous joy.

So, let's look at these first five verses in chapter 1. Which begin with; **“Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ...”** Most noticeably he omits the use of the title “apostle”. He calls himself a “servant.” The word servant carries the idea of being devoted to another, to the disregard of one's own interests.

The **RECIPIENTS V-1 Saints** is a word which literally means **“holy ones,”** those who are holy in Jesus Christ. The New Testament calls all believers saints. We don't like to think of ourselves as saints, but the word simply means to be separated to God, to be separated for a holy purpose.

Paul was writing to *all* the saints, including the bishops and deacons. "Bishops" is "overseers." Now understand that the terms: *pastor, bishop and elder* all are used interchangeable and refer to the same office. Deacons were also servants in the church who were to assist the pastor with the care of the church body primary in the secular affairs of the church and their function grew out of the indecent found in Acts 6.

#### **The REWARD V-2**

The reward of knowing Jesus Christ is **“grace” and “peace.”** God is the only source of this peace. True and lasting peace is the fruit of a right relationship with God. There is no real or lasting peace without God's grace.

#### **The REMEMBRANCE V-3**

That is an astonishing statement. Paul is saying, **“I can't think of anything unpleasant about you. I can't think of one thing that I am unhappy about when I think about you.”** Wouldn't it be wonderful if we so lived, loved, and served God together that as we gathered moment by moment, day by day, week by week, until Jesus comes, we would be able to say, **“I thank God upon every remembrance of you.”**

#### **The REJOICING Vs.4-5**

After he has told them he remembers them with happiness, he says that he is continually praying for them and remembered their sweet **“FELLOWSHIP”**. You cannot have real Bible fellowship with someone unless you have something in common. For Christian fellowship, this means to be cleansed by the precious blood and be saved.

The Philippian believers had great spiritual stamina. They did not slow down. He said, "You participated in the gospel on the first day and you are still doing it." It had been ten or twelve years, and they were still going strong. We all need to Keep on Keeping on the race that is set before us in **the “fellowship of the Gospel.”**