



Sermon Series: Life Worth Living Part 1

Sermon Title: Encouragement

Speaker/ Date: Reuben Scheeringa, September 12, 2021

This letter to the Philippians proves that even while the apostle Paul sat in a foul Roman prison, he never lost his passion, his sense of mission, his sense of direction, his command of the situation and he never abandoned his role of leadership, or his Joy in Christ.

Philippians 1:1-11

“Flatter me, and I may not believe you. Criticize me, and I may not like you. Ignore me, and I may not forgive you. Encourage me, and I will not forget you.”—William Arthur Ward

We see Paul here lifting this church in Philippi. And Paul never issues some worn out generic brand of encouragement. In fact, an important idea comes through as he opens this very unique letter.

BIG IDEA: When we encourage, we connect best.

To encourage in Christ like Paul we are freed to speak to (to):

1. Specific needs.

Philippians 1:3-5

Many of us may look at our gospel tasks as meaning nothing, but to many or to one, they may mean the world. “I thank God, I pray with joy, everytime I remember you”. I love seeing faces in the crowd. Sometimes, it is very distracting when I see people I have not seen in a while. Why? Because when I see you, I thank God, and view you with joy.”

Not just any joy, but specific joy and prayer. Specific instances when we have met, prayed, or ministered to one another. And in those specifics, I am encouraged as you are encouraged.

2. Specific love.

Philippians 1:6-8

Paul is speaking specifically here about the Philippians, a church that he has obvious affection for, maybe even more so than others, in some ways. Why? Connection.

Paul, is talking about a love for a people, bonded in blood. Not the blood of a fellow soldier, but the blood of Christ.

This has enabled people to go to Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Russia, or Florida, and find and connect with people under this banner. People we may not get to see often, but people we pray diligently for. People we love, and care for dearly.

This is a love that transcends places and times, and encourages Paul, in his remembrances. Knowing, that no matter what, God is going to complete his work in you. Until Jesus returns. Whether he is there or not. This encourages Paul, and me, and I hope you.

BIG IDEA: *When we encourage, we connect best.*

3. Specific hope.

Philippians 1:9-11

Why do we connect differently? Because we really mean it.

Sometimes it seems like we live in a culture that tells us we did a great job, but, we all know we didn't. Maybe, some of us call it the culture of participation trophyism.

Paul's encouragement is different. It means so much more. It matters so much more

It is not centered around them, but around who? **Christ.**

Encouragement matters, and when it is done in Christ, it matters so much more. When it is done in His name it is done sincerely, personally, specifically, publicly, and frequently.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **The Bible is full of examples of men and women who reached out and encouraged each other – if you have a specific example that speaks to you, please share it.**
- **What are ways that people give and receive encouragement?**
- **What are some specific ways that you have been encouraged by others?**
- **Describe a time when God was the source of your joy through a difficult situation.**
- **Are there people in your life today who need encouragement? Think of your sphere of influence, and try to identify 2 people to whom you can show real encouragement as they wrestle with life's issues.**