

LOOKING AT THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Philippians 1:3-11

INTRODUCTION

- A. Our Year In Review:
 - 1. 7 baptisms and 4 “responses.”
 - 2. Ryan Patrick born (April).
Note: 3 great grandchildren.
 - 3. Lost dear friends: Martha Lawson, Gabriel Collins and Sam Aldridge.
Note: 31 close friends and family.
 - 4. The Bryants, Robinsons , and Patricks moved away.
 - 5. New members: Carolyn Wilson and Cheryl Shirey.
 - 6. Special contributions to help with Hurricanes Florence and Michael.
 - 7. Sponsored a Clothing Give Away.
 - 8. Ground Breaking in July.
- B. Challenges for New Year:
 - 1. Bible Bringers!
 - 2. Perfect Attendance – Bible class and worship.
 - 3. Daily Bible Reading.
 - 4. More time in prayer.
 - 5. More service to God – how?
 - a. Have I stepped out of my comfort zone?
 - b. How do I show my love to others.
 - c. Do I only serve when it fits into my plans?
 - 6. Proclaiming Christ to others.
 - a. Have I told someone about Christ?
 - b. Invited someone to worship or Bible class?
 - c. Talking with someone about spiritual matters?
 - d. Developing “new” friendships – teaching Christ?
 - e. Talking to family?

I. LOOKING AT THE PAST WITH THANKSGIVING TO GOD, vss. 3-5.

- A. Fond memories of their association.
 - 1. Each memory was dear and brought gratefulness.
 - 2. Doesn’t mean everything was “good”.
 - a. He had suffered and been mistreated, Acts 16:11-40.
 - b. The church was not without problems, Phil. 4:2.
 - c. Perhaps he saw the good that had come about, Rom. 8:28.
- B. Good memories of the church.
 - 1. Participation in the gospel.
 - a. Form of word used 5 times in this letter, 1:5, 7; 2:1; 3:10; 4:15.
 - b. It expresses a sense of community, closeness, and cooperation.
 - 2. The Philippian church had participated by praying for him and helping with financial support.

II. LOOKING AT THE PRESENT WITH CONFIDENCE IN GOD, vss. 6-8.

- A. Confidence found at least five times, 1:6, 14, 25; 3:4.
- B. Paul's confidence was not in himself, but in God, 2:13.
 - 1. Through His Word, Heb. 4:12.
 - 2. Through everyday events, Rom. 5:3-5.
 - 3. Through people (Titus brought comfort), 2 Cor. 7:6.
 - 4. Through His indwelling Spirit, Acts 2:38.
- C. God would finish His work.
 - 1. He would "carry it out to completion."
 - 2. That doesn't mean we can't fall as Christians.
 - 3. God works through those who allow Him to work in their lives.

III. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH PRAYER TO GOD, vss. 9-11.

- A. That your [*unselfish*] love may abound still more and more.
 - 1. Love like a mighty stream, ever growing in size and strength.
 - 2. But love needs direction.
 - a. Real knowledge (with something added) – to fully perceive.
 - i. A comprehensive knowledge of God and His will.
 - ii. Comes only from a diligent study of God's Word.
 - b. All discernment – means perception and understanding.
 - i. NIV has "*depth of insight*."
 - ii. It is making a distinction – a sign of maturity.
- B. Approve the things that are excellent.
 - 1. Something that has been examined, tested, and found to be genuine.
 - 2. In the Old Testament, the term was used for the "testing of metal."
 - 3. Not only what is good, but to discern what is ***better*** and what is ***best***.
- C. Grow in Christian character.
 - 1. Sincere – two Latin words meaning "without wax".
 - a. Merchants hiding flaws in merchandise with wax.
 - b. Reputable dealers advertised wares as "sincere".
 - c. To be without deception or without hypocrisy.
 - 2. Blameless.
 - a. Living godly lives to the best of their ability without stumbling.
 - 3. Sincere deals with character, blameless with reputation.
- D. To be filled with the fruit of righteousness.
 - 1. Christ-like qualities others can observe, Gal. 5:22-23.
 - 2. This is fruit that comes through Jesus, John 15:5.
- E. To the glory and praise of God.
 - 1. Everything we say or do should be for the glory and praise of God.