

## Philippians 1:1-11

### Sermon Questions

#### Gathering

1. Who was your best friend growing up? How did you meet and why was this person so important to you?
2. Name someone you consider a close friend who has moved away. Do you keep in touch? Do they still feel close? How do you feel when you think back on your time with this person?

#### Looking at the Text

Paul is writing a letter to the Christians in the city of Philippi. This church grew out of a visit Paul made to the city recorded in Acts 16. What started as a small group of new believers has now grown to be a strong, established church. They have continued to support Paul with money and companionship even while he is away from them. Paul is now in prison but even there the church has shown him love. They sent Epaphroditus to be with Paul while he awaited trial. Now Epaphroditus is returning to Philippi and Paul writes this letter to send with him.

Read Philippians 1:1-11

1. How would you describe the overall emotionally content of the first eleven verses? What does Paul feel when he thinks of the Philippians?
2. Look in verse 1. Paul says that the Philippians are actually in two places at the same time. They are IN and they are AT. What are these dual locations and what does he mean?
3. What does the phrase "together with the overseers and deacons" say about the maturity of this church?
4. In verses 3-5, why does Paul pray with such joy?
5. Read verse 6. When Paul left the church is was just a small group. Now it is a church. What does Paul think will happen in the future?
6. In verse 7 Paul mentions that whether he is free or in prison he shares something with the Philippians. What does he share and what does he mean?
7. Look at verses 9-10. What does Paul pray in verse 9 and what reason does give in verse 10?
8. What do you think Paul means by "discern what is best"?

#### Application

1. When we are children we seem to make friends all the time but this can be difficult as we get older. How many people in your life do you consider friends as opposed to acquaintances?
2. Do you think it is easier or harder to make friends as you get older?
3. Why do you think it is important to Paul that his friends "Share in God's grace with me"? Do you notice a difference in intensity between Christian friends and those outside the faith? Why or why not?
4. How can we make verses 9-11 our prayer for each other?