



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Sermon Title: "Real Gratitude"
Series Title: Authentic: Real Life in Christ, Inside & Out
Preacher: Rev. Dr. Bryan Eckelmann
Philippians 4:10-23
February 25, 2024

Description:

This sermon will attempt two things: 1) to look back on the experience of journaling in Philippians and its general themes of Joy during Struggle, Unity in the midst of disagreement, and Service in the image of Christ. 2) Paul ends the letter with gratitude for the Philippians generosity (well-known from 2 Cor 8:1-5). Thru them we learn that generosity is the outcome of an Authentically Grateful life.

Icebreaker (for groups):

If you were to attend Trinity's Thanksgiving service and accept the pastor's invitation to express your gratitude for what God has done in your life, what would you tell the congregation?

Reflections on the Sermon:

What points in Pastor Bryan's sermon resonated with you?

Scripture Passage: Philippians 4:10–23 (ESV)

¹⁰I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

¹⁴Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. ¹⁷Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. ¹⁸I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. ²⁰To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

²¹Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. ²²All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

²³The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Reviewing the Scripture:

1. In verse 10, why is Paul rejoicing in the Lord?
2. In verse 11, do you think Paul is in need at this time? What has he learned about being in need?
3. In verse 12, what two things does Paul know, and what secret has he learned?



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

4. Looking at verses 11-13, what is the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need?
5. In verses 14-16, what things did the Philippians do that set them apart from others?
6. In verse 17, what does Paul seek? Why would he want it as it relates to the Philippians?
7. In verse 18, what is Paul grateful for?
8. In verses 19-20, what does Paul say God will give the Philippians? What does God get in return?

Going Deeper:

1. What do you think was the backstory behind Paul's rejoicing in the Lord in verse 10? Where do you see Paul being gracious toward the Philippians here?
2. In verses 11-13, for what things is Paul grateful, and to whom does he give credit?
3. In verses 14-16, in what ways was the church at Philippi generous toward Paul?
4. In verse 17, what is the fruit that Paul is speaking of? What sort of credit (i.e., counting) is Paul referring to? (see James 2:23)
5. In verse 18, what is a "sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God?" (see Romans 12:1, Hebrews 11:6)
6. In verse 19, would Paul say that God is generous? Where have you seen God's generosity in your life?
7. Given that James 2:26 tells us that faith without works is dead, could it be said that gratitude without generosity is dead? Why or why not?



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

8. What would you say is the relationship between faith and generosity, if any? In what ways does your generosity reflect your faith?

Personal Questions:

1. What was your experience as you journaled through this Philippians study? How likely is it that you will make journaling a new habit? If needed, are you willing to give up an old habit?
2. How does your gratitude for what God has done for you compare with your generosity toward others? In other words, how much of your gratitude results in tangible generosity?
3. Would you or your small group consider exploring service opportunities at one of Trinity's local ministry partners as one way to express your gratitude to God through service in Christ's name?

Prayer:

Father, thank You for supplying our every need. Your generosity is not just in what we think we want or deserve; it is according to Your riches in glory in Christ Jesus, far exceeding anything we can ask or imagine. Holy Spirit, help us learn to be content in every situation. And in our heavenly contentment, may we be so grateful to You that we cannot help but be generous toward others with our time, our words, our service, and our treasures. To our generous God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen!