

The Most Important Thing

June 17, 2012

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11

Vol. 2 Num. 24

Core Competency:

Eternity- I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

“Your heart must not be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. You know the way to where I am going.” (John 14:1-4)

Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

❸ LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God’s word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFEGROUP.

Introduction

2011 boasts one of the worst episodes of flooding since the Great Depression. Last year, the swollen Mississippi River overflowed in record proportions, blanketing thousands of square miles. Spurred on by large amounts of rain and bountiful Rocky Mountain snow, the Mississippi rushed out of its banks. It spilled over its massive reservoirs and spread across huge tracts of land submerging homes, businesses and roadways. If you lived in affected areas, you had to stand back and marvel at the water as it escaped from its winding banks engulfing everything in sight.

In many ways, God’s love is like a river. Writing to the Philippians, Paul prays that these believers would have a love that rises up and overflows its banks. He asks not just that their love would abound but that it would abound more...and more. Paul’s desire was that the love of God would so fill them that it would spill over its banks affecting everyone in its path. Paul wasn’t praying for a little ankle-deep wading pool experience along the margins of the Philippian community. He was asking for God’s mighty love to burst forth, in power, changing forever, the lives with whom they had contact.

It is interesting to note that, as flood waters recede, silt is deposited. This makes the soil in areas that have been flooded extremely fertile. Similarly, when God’s love continually floods over the landscape of the human heart, the soil becomes fertile and ready to receive the seeds of truth that God providentially sows into our lives.

This Week

As you study this week, ask God to allow you to be the conduit through which God brings His overflowing love to the parched ground of your home, your work, your school, and your community. Ask him to break down any barriers that you may have erected that prevent His love from freely flowing from you to others. Yield to the Holy Spirit, so that God’s infinite love will continuously spring up fresh, new, and life-giving, both in you and through your life.

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage:

Philippians 1:1-11

1 Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus: To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons.

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I give thanks to my God for every remembrance of you,

4 always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer,

5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

6 I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

7 It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, and you are all partners with me in grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and establishment of the gospel.

8 For God is my witness, how deeply I miss all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

9 And I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment,

10 so that you can approve the things that are superior and can be pure and blameless in the day of Christ,

11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

② DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the following questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

1. Paul recollects the Philippians with joy because of their partnership with him in the gospel. Think about being committed in a formal business “partnership.”
 - a) What resources would you invest as a partner?

 - b) What might you do to more fully “partner” in the work of missionaries that you or Clear Lake Bible Church support(s)?

2.
 - a) From verse 6, to what do you think “a good work” refers?
 - b) Who initiates this work in the life of a believer and how?

 - c) As a believer, what is your responsibility, to God, in this process? Is there any way that a believer can hinder this process?

3. Look at Paul's prayer for the Philippians in verses 9-10.

a) What principles about love do you discover from these verses and the passages below?

1 John 4:7-8

Matthew 22:36-39

1 Corinthians 13:2

b) What in your life, your schedule, your attitudes, your habits might act as a barrier to God's love overflowing from you to others?

c) What specific actions could you take to better allow God's infinite love to be expressed both in and through your life?

4. How does knowledge affect how you love? Can knowledge ever be a barrier to loving? Explain your answer.

5. What is insight? What are some ways that you, as a believer, can get Godly insight?

6. Is there an implied cause and effect in Paul's prayer from verses 9-11? Explain your answer.

Sermon Notes:

③LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFEGROUP.

Paul writes that love that grows in knowledge and discernment bears fruit. As a group, discuss the relationship between knowledge and discernment and how it *could*, or *has* affected your relationship with God and with others. Give examples.

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I live life with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away God's Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away God's money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ