

# “THE TIES THAT BIND”

Phil. 1:1-11

Intro: The letter to the Phillipians stands out in Paul’s writings as a letter of gratitude. It seems that the Philippian believers had, time and again, reached out to Paul financially and spiritually. This letter is Paul’s effort to say "Thank you", to some people who are very special to him.

In these opening verses, Paul meditates on his relationship with the Philippian church. As he does, he notes some reasons why their fellowship has been close and why it has endured through the years. These characteristics seem to be evident in this congregation. Today, I would like to spend some time talking to you about The Ties That Bind.

This congregation was strong, and their relationship with Paul endured because they all shared some very important characteristics. Allow me to share with you what they shared with each other. Characteristics that I believe we also share today.

## I. THEY SHARED SALVATION - v. 1, 6

A. Salvation is the common need of all men – Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”(Ill. Many do not see the need; Many do nothing about the need; Salvation is available for all who have the need!)

B. Salvation brings eternal life, John 10:28 “**And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.**” It does more! It unites people of varied backgrounds, interests and desires into a unified body of believers. (Ill. Genuine salvation is the only hope for true peace in the church!) (Ill. There is a vast difference between those who are saved, and those who are lost!)

C. Salvation is the primary tie that binds in the church of God.

## II. THEY SHARED A SERVANT SPIRIT - v. 1, 5-9

A. These believers, along with Paul, were true servants of God, and of one another. (Ill. Servant is one devoted to another to the disregard of one’s own interests.) This is the mark of genuine Christianity, a willingness to put others ahead of self – Phil. 2:4 “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” Rom. 15:1 “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”)

B. Their servant's spirit manifested itself in three ways.

1. v. 3-4 **Mutual Care** – Those who truly care, care for the needs of others – Gal. 6:2 “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.” Ill. This is displaying the true spirit of Christ (Ill. This is “**Empathy**” – The ability to experience as one's own, the feelings of another!) True mutual care fosters genuine love among the members of the body. People like knowing they are cared for!

2. v. 4 **Mutual Prayer** – There are times, when we cannot help bear a load physically, but we can be there for our brothers spiritually. While **empathy** is literally experiencing the need of another, **sympathy** is being able to share their feelings. This is the force of Rom. 12:14. No where is this act of genuine love better portrayed than in a consistent prayer life, which makes supplication for the needs of others. Paul reminds the Philippians that he was in prayer for them constantly. Believers ought to pray for one another! (Ill. Moses on the mountain and Aaron and Hur – Ex. 17)

3. v. 7 **Mutual Love** – Here is the true key to successful fellowship. Love is the essential ingredient for success in the church. (Ill. We can do a lot of things, but to make a difference, we must have love – (1 Cor. 13:1-8). Genuine Christian love always manifests itself in action one toward another– 1 John 3:18 “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” Love is a command and not an option –Matt. 22:38, 39 “**This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup>And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**” Genuine love among brethren is a mark of true salvation – 1John 4:7 “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” 20 “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” – **No love, no Jesus**, but Know Jesus and know love! Where true love is, other essential elements of fellowship will be found –**Forgiveness, peace, joy, kindness, tenderness, meekness, blessing and acceptance.** First Baptist Church of Barberville is marked by love!

4. v.11 **Spiritual Activity** – The Philippians possessed a desire to work for and bring honor to the Lord. This is a much needed attitude

in our day. Thank God for those who have, and have had, a mind to work.

### III. **THEY SHARED SINCERITY** - v. 10

A. Many congregations in that day were just playing church, (Ill. Corinth), but not the Philippians! They were sincere about what they were doing. Church wasn't a social gathering, it was the Lord's business and it meant something to them to be called a Christian. They were held together in a desire to serve the Lord.

C. I wonder, are you as sincere about your commitment here as you need to be? Sincerity and a genuine desire to see the Lord's work carried out is a necessary ingredient for continued success in this church!

D. Wouldn't today be a great day for every member of First Baptist Church of Barberville to get sincere about the work we have to do?

Conc: Paul and Philippi had a wonderfully close relationship because they shared some wonderful things. Those same characteristics they shared as just as needed today as they were then. Look at yourself and see where you stand today. Are you saved? Do you possess that servant spirit? Are you as sincere about the Lord's work here as you could be? I challenge every one of us to strive together to make this church even greater in the coming days than she has been in the past, or is right now. Will you come this morning if the Lord has spoken to your heart? Let's strengthen those ties that bind.