

IS IT IN YOU? - WK4
THE NOTICED LOVE
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PHILIPPIANS 2:1-16

Intro

Turn with me to Philippians ...

→ the principles Paul lays out – the things he’s talking about in this letter are connected to our love flourishing...being on display for others to see...

Recite verse from last week: phil 1:9 (msg)

→ I don’t have any bags of coffee for ya today – I thought about going to Crate & Barrel, but realized I could only afford the bag...

T Today, we’re going to take a big picture look at Phil. chapter 2...you’ll remember last wk that Glenn kind of zoomed in on a couple verse - walked us through v.1-2 – how we’re to be filled up with the encouragement, comfort from Christ.

Philippians 2:1-2

Paul is saying to this church – these people – that if you have received comfort, encouragement, compassion from God – look for these, listen for these – these are the very: (*what’d Glenn call it*): **fuel for your soul**...learn to reflect on your life and notice God’s comfort & encouragement He’s giving you...let it fill you up, fuel your living...

Live on purpose – unified together

Paul’s emphasizing this beauty of being filled up by God – that’s what we looked at last wk... now, this week we’re going to zoom back out and glean the big picture from what Paul’s communicating – **He’s wanting us to be filled up for a reason**, to do something with the fuel we’ve been given...

T in fact, to get us thinking big picture – I’ve got some photos here – that I’ve zoomed in on and I want you to see if you can determine what these are – then we’ll see them big picture...

Game:

- 1 shopping cart
- 2 Golden Gate Bridge
- 3 Stop Light
- 4 Steelers Helmet (make a superbowl announcement) (little known fact: “Roethlisberger” is actually Hebrew for “*mighty hunter of birds*” – just kidding...

T Now, we’re connected everything back to this prayer that Paul is praying for these believers – that they’re love would flourish and a flourishing love is fueled by God pouring into you – into me...it’s filling me up; it’s filling me up to now turn around and do something with that

Philippians 2:3

- don’t be selfish, spend all this energy trying to impress other – be humble

Philippians 2:4

- Don’t look out only for your own interests – but take interest in other too...

Q let me ask you: where is Paul writing this? Prison...if there is ever a time, anyone that seems to have the right to be stuck in self pity, self focus...

Paul is writing some almost 2,000 years ago – to this group of people that seemed to have this natural drift to make it all about themselves...their focus would narrow and they had this tendency to only take concern about themselves...they had this drift toward paying attention to their own needs, wants and desires...

Now – of course humanity has improved & matured so much in the last 2,000 yrs – that this doesn't apply to us – today...*does it?--(pause)--*

Illust:

The other night – we're getting ready to watch some family tv...so we're asking the kids What we should watch together...Calista starts bellowing 'my shows', repeatedly for the Next 2 minutes...ever increasing volume levels and annunciations...

And it got me thinking – you know: I'm no different at times: I have this bent within me, to make it all about me if I'm not careful...

- I live in a world where my ipod can produce for me *my* music choices
- With TiVo – I can watch TV when *I want*...
- I can get anything *custom made* – from a hamburger to a house
- I live and move in a land where almost any product or service can be *tailored to my taste*, and preference and → on demand is under my command...
- And in a world like that – it's very easy for me to drift toward being self-focused!
- I can drift to it all being about what I want, what I need: and the scope of my vision can get really *narrow and nearsighted*...

→ and Paul's saying: **live a life of noticing**: as you get filled up by God, learn to pay attention, to notice those around you – and express his encouragement, comfort, compassion to others...

→ Paul is calling this church in Philippi and THIS CHURCH in Tucson: **to a life of noticing...**
The life we're to live in Christ is a life where it's motivated to notice others and pour the encouragement, compassion and comfort we've received: (we're blessed to be a blessing)
...a flourishing love is a love that is expressing attention, not selfishly stockpiling it...

Ex:- a life of noticing is like:

- Its things like the way this church supports mission work around the world – thinking of others, whom we may never meet – b/c we want to share God's love with them...b/c it's so impacted us...
- it's like the community groups around here:
 - o YP's (young professionals) that recently looked after furnishing and preparing an apartment for a new refugee family – through Cherie Grey and her work with incoming refugees here in Tucson...
 - o It's the other night as I'm standing in a ER room with a friend – she's so nervous, scared for her husband – she emerges to the waiting room where she is engulfed by the love of 15 members of her ABF – she's overwhelmed by their comfort

- It's the very things, that you and I can do on an individual basis, everyday – for your kids, for a neighbor, co-worker, friend: as we live fueled by God's encouragement, comfort and compassion... → *we're called to a life of noticing...*

Philippians 2:5

- we should take on the same mindset is what Paul is saying here...v 5-11
- This is a beautiful piece of writing...
- many scholars believe this to be an ancient church hymn or poem that they would recite
- It speaks of Jesus' humanity & divinity like now other passage in scripture – it's gorgeous illustration of Christ's supreme humility

Philippians 2:9a, 11...

- don't you love the ending of this: 'confess that Jesus Christ is Lord' – where is Paul again, under house arrest chained to a guard that has spend his whole life invading, conquering, coercing people to declare that 'Caesar is lord!' Yet Paul, is engaged in conversation – saying there is another power that is afoot in this world...and its foundation is not in war and forced coercion, but rather in humility and love! And Jesus - He is the true Lord...

T I don't have time to unpack any more, but its beautiful ancient literature...Paul continues:

Philippians 2:12-13

Paul is saying: I know you live obediently when I'm there, and I'm exhorting you to continue even though I'm not now...live obediently like Christ did...

“work out your salvation with fear and trembling”

- some folks have taken this verse to mean that you have to earn your salvation with God...**NO**
- Paul and other Apostle's are crystal clear about our relationship with God being a gift not earned through merit...
- Paul is calling this church: work out – put into practice in their daily living, what God had worked in them through the Holy Spirit...
- This ISN'T work *for* your salvation – this is: work out the salvation that you've already gotten...

Philippians 2:13

- God's empowering you through the HS to help your love flourish...according to his purpose...keep you unified, working well together...

→ the 'you' in this passage is plural. Paul is writing to this whole community – calling them to live out God's purposes in unity, expressing God's love, to a life of noticing others, letting compassion flow, operating out of humility...that these things would define their community's reputation and relationships...

→ sometimes we miss the communal nature of the Scriptures...

Philippians 2:14-15

This portion is absolutely loaded with O.T. references – and if we miss the communal nature of Scripture – we’d forget that there are lots of people gathered in Philippi listening to this letter who might have even understood what Paul is doing here...others would have...and they’d lean over perhaps and say: brilliant...Paul – I’ll tell you later, or stop there and explain (Exodus – Moses, what’s that?...)

Grumble – Ex 16
Blameless – Gen 17
Crooked/depraved – Deut 32:5
Shine – Daniel 12
Run in Vain – Isa 55

Paul is making reference to a story of the Exodus...

Story of the Exodus is the story of a group of people – God’s people the bible calls them – who are stuck in slavery in Egypt...and God reaches out his hand and in grace and mercy – rescues them from slavery

...but the people ‘they grumble and complain’ – the path in the wilderness, post slavery is difficult and they grumble and complain – and they ask: “why did you bring us out here, did you bring us out here to die?” -- and they just don’t get it.

Paul is essentially saying: don’t be like the Israelites – but YOU, you shine like stars!

The Rabbis actually tell an ancient story about the exodus and about these people who have been rescued from slavery – they cont’d to grumble and argue: even after this unbelievable act of liberation had been done on their behalf...

Ancient Rabbis: tell the story of two former slaves who are rescued; the Sea has been miraculously parted and they are being led through it to the other side...but they find themselves walking along the sea floor and their complaining because a bit muddy...and their heads are down...one says: “*I’m getting mud on my sandals and the other says I’m getting mud in between my toes and I hate that feeling, it’s so sticky and gross*”

→ and the Rabbis say: “*and so they continued on, complaining about the mud in their sandals and between their toes and because their heads were down...they weren’t looking up to see the walls of water being held back for their safety and liberation.*”

Paul says: Don’t grumble and complain – you – you shine like stars!

T turn with me to Deuteronomy 32

Paul does something here in Philippians that harkens back to the Exodus story – and he takes something from back then – and he flips it, turns it...

*he’s referring back to these people who didn’t get it...that’s what Duet 32 is about these people that didn’t get it...they were stuck complaining about the mud, even though they were surrounded by the miracles...

Duet 32:5

This famous text in Duet. Is like this denouncement of these people who didn't get it: they're not even like the children of God to grumble/complain...

Paul then in Philippians 2...Turns this/flips it -- and is reminding these people in Philippi...of – who they are – my dear friends!...

- You are children of God, without fault (because of what Jesus did for you)
- you've been rescued out of your slavery (he says in his letter to the Galatians)
- you are a new creation (he says to the church in Corinth)
- you are seated with Christ, more than a conqueror, God's friend, chosen, beloved, forgiven, sealed and treasured...
- you are God's children (phil. 2:15)

→ in fact, the Scripture writers seem to go to great lengths to remind us of who we are in Christ!

You are God's children

You: - don't grumble and complain...instead...

You are to shine like stars *in the midst* of a crooked and depraved generation...

You aren't like those in the desert...

→ Paul is essentially saying: **“how the story went, is not how the story has to go.”**

They may have missed the point...but you don't have to miss it...

This is how the story went then...but it's not how the story has to go now...

You're called and fueled for something different...

How the story went – is not how the story has to go!!!!

- your father might have been an alcoholic, but you don't have to be
- your mother might have been relationally distant, but you don't have to
- your parents marriage might have ended in divorce, but yours doesn't

How the story went...is not how the story has to go!

→ that's the beauty of God filling you up (v.1-2) with the very compassion, encouragement, comfort & power of Christ and the HS ...it's fueling your life!

You are children of God – You are to shine like stars!

T remember: how did Jesus say it: **Matthew 5:14, 16**

T You my dear Philippians friends – shine like stars...

Q How are you to shine? ...*without grumbling or arguing...(repeat 2x)*

Now, I don't know about you – but that's a natural drift for me. We live in a world where so much is broken...and if my drift is to focus on myself and *NOT live a life of noticing*...I tend to spend my energy noticing the things I don't like...I can slip all too easily into a state of chronic complaining

Q Do you know people like that? I'm sure it's other people, not you?...

T Now, you've probably been wondering why this is on the stage...I think it's beautiful and interesting that the word here in the Greek: for grumbling is: ***gongysmos*** (sounds like a rash doesn't)

- I hear on the front of that word: (hit the gong)
- Do everything without gongysmos
- Grumbling sounds like gonging doesn't it? → remember the gong show: the gong was like the audiences tool to say 'we just don't want to hear you anymore' ...
- It'd be a great word for kids to learn: mom, dad that's enough of gongysmos
- As a Parent – you'd hear your kids...Hmmm,hmmm - & you'd get to strike the *gong*
- Maybe one in the car, (you find yourself stuck in traffic or can't exit I-10) and you start into this complaining about how this is biggest inconvenience since before sliced bread...your spouse could simply: "*gonging*"
- A teacher can have this in her classroom – kids can complain about homework...teacher could say: I think you're saying that you don't want to be disciplined, or work hard and you just want to be slacker and listen to your iPod all day, but all I heard was: "*gonging*"

T Paul is saying: don't get entrapped in a life of gongysmos (of gonging and just making noise) – YOU – YOU are children of God - shine, live a life of noticing...and if a group of people do that: well, they will shine like stars and people will take notice of them!

Illust

Sometimes my kids & I will lay out on the trampoline at night...1st star out is Venus and it's bright, but the skyline still has some hue and color to it...it isn't quite dark yet...but have you noticed: that as the darker the night gets the more the stars stand out & begin to shine...it become breathtakingly noticeable... their beauty is on full display...

Philippians 2:14-16

Conclusion:

Living a life of noticing,

Living without grumbling and instead seeking to shine

Is how your love, my love, our love can begin to flourish – can begin to shine out in the darkness & brokenness, so others take notice...and see hope...

→Because it's all about God's story – that's our purpose – to live for Christ.

To be filled up & shine out his love.

T Today – I've asked our worship team to come lead us in some worship – a time to reflect, contemplate what this might mean for us...for you...

Maybe you want to have a time of confession, a time to re-center yourself...a time to ask Him how this might work out in an everyday kind of way...who he might be calling you to notice...

Prayer:

Father, we love you...we are so grateful for your encouragement, comfort, compassion – help us to notice it more readily, be fueled by it and pass it along more quickly. Give us your eyes to see – to live a life of noticing...help US to be a people, a church that shines forth for you...to be unified in your purpose, your calling...obedient to

you...and Father, thank you for letting us be your children, your friend! Let us live – for your renown...because
YOU AND YOU ALONE ARE EVERLASTING...