

A Philippian Farewell

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[0 : 0 0] The following sermon is made available by Lakeside Bible Church in Cornelius, North Carolina.

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These few sentences in verses 21 to 23 actually contain, I think, a fitting summary for the major themes of the letter.

I don't mean that to say that that was Paul's intention, that he was intending to summarize everything that he had said. And this is just, he's just saying goodbye. But as we understand it and as we begin to study it, we can see that even represented in his goodbye, we see once again the renewal of these major themes that have existed throughout the letter.

[1 : 1 1] And I think that it would be helpful to us to make note of those and just remind ourselves as we close out our study of this letter exactly what those themes are and how they should matter to us.

We first see in verse 21 this theme of the fellowship of believers. The fellowship of believers. Look with me again. Paul simply says, Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.

The brethren which are with me greet you. In fact, all the saints salute you, he says. Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. It seems like such a simple thing to address, but this greeting is a reminder of the great fellowship, the great love and relationship that Paul had with this church.

And that is even his ministry team had with this church. Significant to the greeting is the fact that he uses the word every as opposed to the more generic all.

Now let me explain. Look at verse 22. Paul, when expressing that the people there in Rome, in the church of Rome, were sending greetings to Philippi, he says, All the saints salute you.

[2 : 2 3] Well, we know in that circumstance, that is a term, a generic term. Not all of the saints in Rome would have even had an opportunity to see Paul. Certainly with those preachers in Rome that had been antagonistic against his ministry, and were actually trying to tear the ministry down, certainly would not have actually come to him and expressed it.

But certainly some people had come and expressed on behalf of the church in Rome, Hey, let the Philippians know that we said hello, that we love them, that we're praying for them. And it was just a generic term.

All the saints in Rome greet you and salute you. But that's not the same word that he uses when he addresses his own personal greeting to the church. He doesn't say all. He doesn't say salute all the saints in Christ Jesus, as if he wanted the elders of the Philippian church to stand up in the assembled congregation.

It says, Hey, Paul says, Hello. He intended that each and every individual believer in the church have this personalized greeting and expression.

It's once again just an expression of Paul's great love as a shepherd to these people. His great love that each and every person, whether they were in that gathering that day or not, that the elders would take this letter.

[3 : 35] And if you've got to go to their house, go to their house and sit down and read the letter to them. Let them know how I'm doing. Let them know how I'm praying for them. Let them know that I love them. Hey, remind them to stand firm.

Remind them to stick to the truth of the gospel and so on and so forth. It's significant here. And then he takes it a step further and he says, The brethren which are with me greet you.

And we begin to understand once again that one of the greatest features of Christian unity is that love exists between all true believers, not just the ones that we know the best.

And the love that exists between us is not on the basis of who is the greatest Christian and who is the lowest Christian. It is the fact that we all belong to Christ and we have this fellowship with one another.

And over and over and over we see this come through in the book of Philippians. We've noted very often throughout our study Paul's use of the koinon word group or koinonia most specifically.

[4 : 35] And it means partnership and fellowship, active participation, sharing in. And this fellowship with Christ and with other believers through Christ is one of the most prominent themes of this letter.

And it underpins so many of the expressions of joy throughout the book. In other words, true joy is found in a relationship with Jesus Christ and is then strengthened by faithful relationships within the local church.

And let's consider just for a moment how this theme and this theme especially of fellowship within the church has come to the surface so often here in Philippians.

They were partners in the work. And that's really where it begins. This koinon word, partnership. These believers were partners with Paul in the gospel and then they were partners with one another.

In fact, flip back to chapter 1 and let's just look at a couple of examples by way of reminder. Right at the beginning of chapter 1, Paul shares his thankfulness for this fellowship.

[5 : 50] Look at verse 5. He says that I'm praying for you. I'm making requests with joy for you. Why? Verse 5. For your fellowship. That's the koinon word.

Koinonia. For your koinonia in the gospel. From the first day that I arrived in Philippi until now. Look down at verse 7. Even it is right for me to think this of you all.

Because I have you in my heart inasmuch as both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. That is the work of the gospel. You are koinon.

Partakers of my grace. They were partners with Paul in the gospel work. And then we get to the end of chapter 1. And we see this from Paul's perspective.

Look at verse 22. He's contemplating whether it's better to go unto heaven to be with Christ or whether he should be happy to stay on earth. And he says, But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor.

[6 : 50] Yet what I shall choose I do not know. For I am in a strait betwixt two. I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you, he says.

And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for the furtherance and joy of your faith. That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming again to you.

So early in chapter 1, we see this partnership in the gospel from the church's perspective. They have partnered with him time and time again. Then we get to the end of chapter 1, and we see this partnership from Paul's perspective.

That to go to heaven right now would be fantastic. But if the Lord so wills that I remain with you, it will be for your joy. And I will glory in the work that the Lord allows me to do with you. Why?

Because we are koinonia in the gospel. We are partners in the gospel. And then we get to the end of chapter 2, and we won't read those verses, but we see the dynamic of other pastors, other church leaders come into this gospel partnership.

[8 : 00] 19, but I trust in the Lord to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state. For I have no man like-minded who will care for your state.

No pastor is going to care for you with my heart the way Timothy will. And I want him to partner with you the way that I have partnered with you. And then they're reminded of Epaphroditus' great love in verse 25.

Yet I supposed it necessary to send you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labor and fellow soldier, but your messenger. And he that ministered to my wants.

Now, here's Epaphroditus' spirit towards the church. For he longed after you all and was full of heaviness because you had heard that he had been sick. He was sick near unto death.

And when he found out that the Philippians knew that, he was concerned that they were concerned. And now his greatest desire was just to get back to Philippi so that he could be of comfort in the gospel to his church.

[8 : 59] There is fantastic and wonderful and supernatural even partnership in the gospel work, this koinonia word as we see it throughout the letter.

Then we see the unity in the spirit. Unity in the spirit. Paul, at the beginning of chapter 2 in those first four verses, makes a very clear call to unity.

Another koinon word is used here in verse number 1. And if there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any koinon, fellowship of the spirit, the Holy Spirit, any bowels of mercies.

And it's insinuated that, and there is all of those things. Verse 2, fulfill you my joy that you be like-minded. Having the same love for one another.

Being of one accord, of one mind. How do they do that? By not letting anything be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind and humility, let each esteem everyone else better than themselves.

[10 : 04] Consider everybody else as more important than you. Consider everybody else's thoughts and preferences as more important than yours. Look not every man on his own things. Every man also on the things of others.

And it's a clear call to unity within the church. And the overflow of that unity is this great love in the Lord that also comes to the surface throughout the letter. Look back at chapter 1 and verse number 8.

Paul expresses his own love for the church. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ. Love in the Lord. And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

And he personalizes that again in chapter 4 and verse number 1. Six different terms of endearment he uses in this one verse. He says, There's a tremendous love that existed between Paul and this church.

And he continued to encourage them to exhibit that same love with one another. Which is where verse 2 in chapter 4 is so convicting even. He calls out Iodias and Syntyche.

[11 : 23] I beg them, ladies, please be of the same mind in the Lord. Love one another in the Lord. And I entreat you also, true yoke fellow church congregation, help them.

Help these women which labored with me in the gospel. Help them love one another by loving them. And then we see this final example of koinonia, the end of chapter 4, as we share in the blessings.

Not only the material blessings that the Lord allows us to put towards his service. But we share in the fruitfulness of the gospel that comes from that. I've come to appreciate the emphasis of this word group in the letter.

In fact, this study for me has taught me once again the importance of life in the local church.

You cannot experience the koinonia of the Philippian congregation without committing to the faithful, regular, even physical gathering of the local church.

[12 : 34] You can. And what a great reminder to us in such a strange and unusual season for church life in the United States.

To be reminded over and over of the koinonia that is to be experienced within the local church. And online services cannot possibly provide this vital aspect of the Christian life as we came to understand very practically for months.

Listening to services and audio formats afterwards just doesn't provide the koinonia the way that the physical gathering provides the koinonia through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

We need each other. We need this gathering together. And we need to do it because it fulfills the commandment of the Lord. But even with that being the case, it is very possible to be faithfully committed to the physical gathering without actually obeying the koinon commands of the Bible.

I took a day two weeks ago to work from a coffee shop in Davidson. I just needed a change of scenery, really, to be honest with you.

[13 : 56] And I got permission from Julie, and I left the house, and I went and sat in a coffee shop. And it's kind of a small room. While I was there, there was a group of men that sat down at a table next to me, and I overheard their conversation.

And I honestly tried not to eavesdrop on what they were saying, but it's a small room. It's hard not to overhear. And the subject that they began to talk about caught my attention in particular. No matter how hard I tried, I was intent on listening, and I think maybe of the Lord.

It was the same week that I was actually writing this particular sermon. The men began talking about their perspectives of church and their churches, specifically the church gathering.

And what I heard them talk about, and not even so much the content of their conversation, but the spirit of their conversation was really pretty heartbreaking.

It proved a lack of true understanding of what the church is and what the church is supposed to be. One man mentioned that his church will not even plan to return to gatherings until the spring of next year.

[15 : 04] And I couldn't help but think of how great a tragedy that there were pastors that were leading their churches not to be together for what will end up being an entire year.

It's a misunderstanding of what the church is, what its purpose is, what God has called us to do, and what God has called us to be. Another man talked about how he believed that this season has helped people to understand that they don't actually need the physical gathering.

That we live in such a time with social media and live streaming that he was content to do that indefinitely because after all, as he put it, Sundays are such a hassle with kids anyways.

And I thought, how heartbreaking is that? If he commits the rest of his life as a father to encouraging his kids to sit in the corner and play around as best as they can while he and his wife try their best to focus in on a TV screen, what's going to happen when those kids have gone through their whole life without any real discipleship, without really any understanding of what the church is and what it's like to worship with other believers, what it's like to have the experience of the blessing and the meeting of God that he promises when his people get together for the purpose of worship and the purpose of communion and the sight and observance of baptism and so on and so forth as we go on.

What a tragedy that is. And maybe 20 years from now, we'll wonder, how did the church get to be like this? Still, one of them was a pastor and he's completely reformatting and restructuring his entire philosophy of ministry now in order that it may operate more as kind of permanent small groups as opposed to an actual church gathering.

[17 : 09] And I thought, if we're going to fulfill what God has commanded for us to do and be as the local church, we must commit to the faithful gatherings of the local church.

And we must not be satisfied with merely attending, but we must be faithfully committed to engage in meaningful discipleship with one another.

Our time together on Sundays is not just for the purpose of fellowship, it is for the purpose of discipleship. And it should extend beyond the walls of the acting out studios so that it becomes a regular process of our life, that we view one another as the church that we submit our discipleship to and that we are going to disciple in return.

That's what the church is. That's what the church does. And even if you come week by week and come to every service, but your method is to come in and not do much as far as relationships are concerned, you will still fall short of the koinonia of the church.

How did they have this love for one another in Philippi? How did they have this love for gospel work? How did they have this unity among themselves, or at least the pursuit of unity among themselves?

[18 : 25] How did they have all the things that this koinonia group brings in? It wasn't because they were disengaged. It was because they were engaged faithfully, not only in the gathering, but in the discipleship of one another in the church.

Mark Dever a couple of months ago tweeted, I thought this was so good. He said, many in media and government seem to think Christians want to be in churches, but they've misunderstood what a church is.

It's not a sacred space we belong in. It's a people that we belong with. That's the church. We've seen that already in the life of our young congregation.

Whereas we start in a elementary school gymnasium, take a quick detour to my living room, then spend a few weeks online together, and now we're in an acting studio praying that the Lord will let us get into a strip mall.

It doesn't matter where we meet. Church is not a place that we go to. It's not a building that we meet in. It is a people that we belong with. And until we understand truly what the church is, we will abandon everything that God has said we're supposed to do.

[19 : 38] Unfortunately, so many professing Christians have made that same mistake. It's not about worship. It's not about discipleship. To be honest, I've come to a point that I don't really know what they think it's about or why they even bother.

There's a purpose to what we do every Sunday. And it's more than me getting up here and rattling off a bunch of things to you. We belong together, right?

Yeah, we do. There's the fellowship of believers. Secondly, we see this theme in verse 22 of the power of the gospel. Power of the gospel.

Look at verse 22. All the saints salute you. Chiefly, he says, those that are of the household of Caesar. You may recall from one of our first studies what was the nature of Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

He wasn't in a dungeon, at least not in this particular imprisonment, maybe on his final one. This one, he was more on kind of a version of house arrest. And every day he was chained to a Roman soldier.

[20 : 50] And there were shifts that they would take, really probably two shifts in a day. And so every single day, he had two different opportunities to preach the gospel to someone that was literally chained to him. And we know that he took advantage of those opportunities.

These soldiers were not just grunt soldiers in the army. Chapter 1 tells us that they belonged to the imperial guard, the Praetorian Guard. And as we understand Roman history, the Praetorian Guard were not chumps.

There were even times in Roman history where they were actually the most powerful political group, actually greater even than Caesar and the Senate even in some portions of history.

And Paul, every day, had access to these powerful men, gospel access to these powerful men. So much so that he says, they've begun to be saved.

And that's going out through the household of Caesar. Household in this context wouldn't have just meant the family of Caesar. It would have meant anybody that actually served in the house or in the palace.

[21 : 58] This could have been more Praetorian soldiers. It could have been chefs and bakers. It could have been butlers and other servants. And then it also could actually mean some relatives of Nero in this particular time.

And what does that tell us? Well, three things, I think. One, it reminds us of the advancement of the gospel. The advancement of the gospel. What kind of power does the gospel have? It is an unstoppable advancement.

That's the power that it has. Look back at chapter one. Paul says in verse number 12, when he's addressing this specifically, he says, I want you to know, brothers, that the things which happened to me have fallen out rather into the furtherance of the gospel, the advancement of the gospel.

How so? So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace and in all other places as well. And many of the brethren in the Lord waxing confident by my bonds are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

And he says, hey, Philippians, it's okay. Don't worry about this. The gospel is advancing. And one of the major themes of the book once again becomes the power of that gospel.

[23 : 11] If the gospel had been something simply contrived in the minds of men, then the Philippians would have had just calls for concern. But the gospel is not man's idea. It is God's purposes in providing salvation.

And God's purposes cannot be stopped. They cannot be stopped. As Paul says to the Romans in chapter 1 and verse 16, I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation for anyone that will believe, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

What's the point in the power of the gospel? It will advance when all hell is trying to stop it. Jesus said the gates of hell cannot prevail against the church and the mission of the gospel that the church has.

What a wonderful truth for these Philippians to be reminded of. Simply by reminding them that, hey, even the folks over in the palace say, hey, and they're praying for you.

And the gospel still works. And it's still moving forward. But it's not just about Paul's ministry of the gospel. We were reminded in chapter 2 that it's actually the responsibility of every Christian to be faithful to share the gospel.

[24 : 27] Look at verse 12 in chapter 2. Paul says, Wherefore, my beloved brothers, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Not a work salvation, but the salvation that has happened on the inside. Work it out to the outside. Why? For it's God that works in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Do all things without murmuring and disputing against that purpose that God is working out in your life, that you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.

What is this advancement of the gospel? It's just not about Paul's imprisonment. It's about the faithful witness of the Philippians. What's the advancement of the gospel about at Lakeside Bible Church?

It's not only the pulpit ministry of Jared. It's the daily ministry of evangelism for each of you as well, and me. And the gospel will advance. Nothing can stop it.

[25 : 42] So let's take that truth and let's boldly proclaim it, understanding that even if we are stopped, the gospel won't be, can't be. We see not only the advancement of the gospel in this book, we see the author of the gospel in this book.

It's my favorite part, to be honest. What is the gospel? The gospel is about Jesus. The writer of the Hebrews said that he is the author and the finisher of our faith, and his work alone provides salvation.

Philippians contains even the greatest and most comprehensive description of this gospel found anywhere in the Bible. Stay right there in chapter 2 if your finger's still there. And in fact, if you haven't done this already, I want to encourage you to live in this passage for a few days.

Memorize this passage for a few days because it's going to help you in that witness, in that advancement. What does he say? Verse 5, Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, the very essence of God, he is God, in other words, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a slave and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

What is the gospel? The gospel's about Jesus. He is the author of it. He is God who has taken on flesh at the same time, never releasing his deity, but taking on full humanity in that moment.

[27 : 28] Why? So that he could save us from our sins and being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death, but not just any death. It wasn't just the thought of death that he became obedient to.

It was the death of the cross, a criminal's death. This atonement that came by way of Christ's death was not a randomized atonement. It was a specific atonement that was guaranteed for all of those who would believe.

It was the criminal's substitution, the perfect for the imperfect, the just for the unjust. His death was intentional, and it was perfectly substitutionary for those who would believe in his name.

That's what the gospel is. It's not about what we do. It's about what God has done through Christ. What good is a dead savior?

No good at all, which is why he didn't stay dead. Three days later, he victoriously raises from the dead from his own power. How is that even possible?

[28 : 37] Because of verse number six, being in the form of God. He was God, not just a man. How could he die? Because he took on the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.

And then what happened? He raised from the dead. And then we get to the next verse. Wherefore God has highly exalted him and given him a name, which is above every name, not the name Jesus.

That's just his earthly name. It's the name Lord, Yahweh, Jehovah, God. So that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow and every things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Why? To the glory of God the Father. What is this gospel about? It's about Jesus. Why did God do all of this?

For his own glory. For his own glory. Why did Jesus become a man? Why did he die on the cross? Why did he raise from the dead? To the glory of God the Father.

[29 : 40] And we were created to give him that glory. And the way that we give him that glory, according to Philippians chapter two, is when we bow the knee and confess the tongue that Jesus Christ is indeed Lord.

He is Yahweh. He is God. He is our Savior. He's the author of the gospel. And that gospel will advance if we will just proclaim it.

And even if we don't, God will use someone to proclaim it. And his word will go forth. And then we see in chapter three the authentic gospel or the authenticity of the gospel.

And we won't dig in too deeply here, but there were great burdens on the church, false teachers, Judaizers specifically in Philippi that were teaching a works-based gospel.

And Paul confronted that, reminded us of what the authentic gospel, true gospel is. It's all about Jesus. And he kind of does it in a unique way.

[30 : 40] We pointed out throughout the chapter that there are kind of three tenses to salvation in the Bible. There's the past tense of salvation. That's justification. That's the moment of regeneration and conversion.

And Paul talks about that in verse seven. He says, but what things were gained to me, I counted loss for Christ. Doubtless, I count all things but loss for the surpassing value of knowing Christ, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung that I may win Christ and be found in him.

That's justification. That's past tense. We have been saved. And then there is the present tense. That's sanctification. We are being saved. We are being conformed to the image of Christ.

And Paul gives his own testimony about that in verse 13. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. I'm not perfect, but this one thing I do, forgetting all those other things that I mentioned before that I pursued and instead reaching forth under those things which are before.

And he says, I press toward the mark. What's he pressing towards? Christ. Christ is both the goal and the prize. And what's happening in this life after our conversion?

[31 : 52] Well, God is working in us to make us blameless. to make us holy that we may shine forth as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. It's continual sanctification. He's conforming us to the image of his son.

And then, most excitingly, there is the future tense of salvation. Glorification. Verse 20. For our citizenship is in heaven.

From whence we look for the Savior and Lord Jesus Christ who shall change. We will be saved. He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.

According to the working whereby he is able, he will do this work. In fact, he does all the work. And so we see not only the fellowship of believers, the power of the gospel, thirdly and quickly, we see the grace of God as a prominent theme in this book.

Look at verse 23, chapter four. It's a benediction. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. That's what he says.

[33 : 06] Benediction is a prayer of blessing. It seeks for God's work to be accomplished in the lives of a particular group of people. We have a benediction every Sunday morning at the conclusion of the service.

We'll do it again today. And almost always, it's a piece of scripture that relates to a prayer of blessing. Sometimes it's a prayer that's just based on scripture. It's always a prayer in nature.

Benediction is not something we recite or just say. It's something that we pray to the Lord. And here in Paul's benediction, there's one word that comes screaming off the page.

Grace. That the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ would be with them was his prayer. But not just a random form of grace.

It's the grace of God that he prays. Indeed, it's only the grace of God that could actually make it possible for the Philippians to do what Paul had written throughout the letter for them to do.

[34 : 07] Think about it. God gives grace to stand. Stand firm on the gospel. At the end of chapter one, he says, look, persecution's coming. If it hasn't already arrived, stand firm on the gospel.

Strive together for the faith of the gospel. And then he even uses a word for grace when he says that they will be facing persecution. He says that they will be graced, granted with persecution.

As if it's a privilege to suffer for the sake of the Lord. And indeed it is. God gives us the grace to do that. To not tuck our tails and run. God gives grace to stand firm.

We pray for that grace. Grace to rejoice in chapter four. Rejoice in the Lord. God gives us grace to do that. Grace to experience peace in verses seven and eight of chapter four.

God gives that grace. It is his grace that passes all understanding. It is the God of peace that grants us that peace. Grace to endure. Philippians 4.13.

[35 : 10] I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. You see where grace is so prevalent in this book? And then finally as we studied last week, grace to provide. And my God shall provide all of your need.

He will supply all of our need. Not material need only, but our spiritual need. God's grace is a dominant theme of the whole scripture. And it certainly is a dominant theme here.

Well, in conclusion, what is the true theme and takeaway of the letter? If we're gonna nail it down to one thing, we could say joy. But really, we have to take it a step further back than that.

The theme of this book is the same theme as every other book of the Bible. It's Jesus. Without Jesus, there'd be no reason for our fellowship, our koinonia.

Without Jesus, there'd be no gospel, therefore no power, therefore no advancement. Without Jesus, there'd be no grace. Without Jesus, the theme of the Bible would be non-existent.

[36 : 16] He is clearly the theme of Philippians. And with that thought, Paul closes the letter with an important and emphatic word. Amen, he says.

Now, I wanna mention something about the use of this word here. Not all English translations include it here at the end of chapter four. And the reason that is is because not all biblical manuscripts. It's not all biblical manuscripts included.

Some do and some don't. And so, many modern translations have actually removed it, referring back to the amen that's listed in verse 20. But there are a lot of biblical scholars like Oxford professor Marcus Bachmuel who believe there is excellent and widespread early textual evidence that makes it perfectly fitting for a concluding amen here.

The amen in verse 20 is undisputed. Nobody questions that one at all. And since it is undisputed, it would make more sense that verse 23 would be more of a scribal omission than it would be a scribal insertion.

But here it is in our text today. And I think because of that, it's perfectly fine and maybe even wise for us to regard it. And so I wanna say that in case you have a translation that doesn't actually say amen here at the end this morning.

[37 : 36] This is why I'm making a big deal of it. Sometimes we use words that we don't really understand. We use them in a way that isn't fitting. It means so be it.

It's a covenant word, actually. And as we understand the scripture, there's even times that it's used in a judicial sense. If you study the book of Nehemiah, you'll find about in chapter four or five that there were some real issues that had arisen in the work on the wall.

The issues came from within, though. The nobles were taking slaves of their own people. And Nehemiah confronts it, and he brings all the people around.

And the way that they came in covenant with one another to make this thing right was the double amen. They all said amen and amen. So be it.

It was judicial. It was covenant in nature. The amen in the scriptures is a covenant. It says, yes, this is true, and I am binding myself to this truth.

[38 : 39] It's not necessarily that I like the truth or that the truth is easy. It is just, this is what the scripture says. Therefore, I am putting myself in covenant with what God has said, and I am binding myself to what he has said in agreement with his will.

So Paul's amen affirms the truth of the letter. And then it binds him and the Philippian church to that truth. The most significant amen is the one that comes after the reading of the truth of God's word.

So as we conclude our study in the book of Philippians, we echo with Paul. Amen. So be it. We affirm that this scripture is God's truth indeed, and we bind ourselves to obey it in God's good grace.

you say, what do you mean? We're going to covenant to be koinonia. Why? Because this is God's truth, and we will bind ourselves to God's truth.

We will covenant to teach the true gospel, to believe the true gospel. Why? Because this is God's truth. So be it.

[40 : 03] We will trust in God's grace, and we will seek his grace. Why? Because this is God's truth. So be it. An unbeliever may hear passages like this preached.

They may hear passages like Philippians chapter 2, or hear an explanation of the gospel of Jesus, and come to the end of it and think, what am I supposed to do with that? Sometimes I think we put a little too much emphasis on what they do with that, when there's nothing they can do with that.

It's not about a prayer. It's not about a come forward. It's not about a, something that they do. What do they do?

Essentially, amen. I've heard the gospel. So be it. I'll believe it. I'll follow him as Lord. And I'll bind myself to its truth.

That's the only true and lasting response to the gospel message. And I want to encourage you with that today. And I want to encourage you with that as you go on sharing this gospel.

[41 : 20] not that we would lead people to some type of religious right or action, but that we would encourage the great amen of their life to hear the truth and say, so be it.

And bind themselves to it. Thank you for listening to this sermon made available by Lakeside Bible Church. Feel free to share it wherever you'd like. Please do not charge for it or alter it in any way without express written consent from Lakeside Bible Church.

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We meet every Sunday morning at 10 a.m. We'd love to meet you.