

Unpacking the Preach

Date: 7th August 2022
Sermon Title: Assurance & Growth
Bible Passage: Philippians 1:1-11

Introduction

Take time to read the passage from a couple of different translations.

- What stands out to you from this passage?
- List the main points from vs.3-11
- Does the passage raise any questions for you?
- Compare Paul's greeting in Philippians to that in Colossians, Galatians and Romans - what is similar, what is different?

Recapping the Preach

Stu began by pointing out that there are several tensions that we encounter in Scripture which are intended to pull against one another. Staying in the place of tension, results in growth. Paul sets up a tension in the opening verses of Philippians.

- How good are you at living with tension that cannot be resolved?
- What are some of the tensions you see in Scripture?

Stu said the first 'pull' we experience is the assurance of salvation. The God given confidence for every believer in Jesus that God the Father approves of us now and will accept us into His presence in the future. This assurance needs to be based on God's promises, our adoption and our union with Christ and not our good works or obedience to God's commands.

- Many people struggle with assurance - why do you think people lack assurance of their salvation?
- Do you have a strong sense of assurance? How do you maintain and foster this?
- How would you encourage someone who is struggling with assurance of their salvation?
- Why do you think Paul wants the Philippians to know they can have assurance of their salvation?

Stu highlighted the second 'pull' which sets up the tension is Paul's prayer for growth (vs.9-11). He made the point that the gospel speaks of salvation by grace but that it is unto good works. Grace comes first but faith demonstrates its obedience through good works.

- Quote: *'it is the obedience that proves the reality of faith. Compare it with an expression like, 'breathe of life'. How do you know there is any life in somebody? Check if they are breathing! No breath, no life. No obedience, no faith. Faith without works, as James would say, is as dead as a body without breath. Feel the breath and rejoice they are alive. See the obedience and rejoice they are believers'.* Do you agree / disagree and why?
- Why do you think Paul prayed that the Philippians would continue to grow? Why was it important that their love abound more and more?
- What do you think the 'fruit of righteousness' (vs.11) is that Paul refers to?
- In what areas of your life are you intentionally seeking to grow or 'abound more and more' in?

Response

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?

Prayer pointers

- Take time to share prayer requests and pray for one another.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://bibleproject.com> (videos)
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>