

One For All

Big Idea: Jesus is the One who is for all, moving the church into Europe where the first church plant, Philippi, modeled the inclusive Spirit of Jesus with their attitudes of unity, joy, and generosity.

1. Unity in Diversity - Acts 16

Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. Philippians 1:27

The first three converts in Philippi were a wealthy Jewish woman, a Greek slave girl, and a middle class Roman prison officer: the gospel spans nations, generations, and social status. Yet within that diversity the Philippian church was known for its united front. In this verse, Paul is using an illustration this Roman military base would understand: the soldiers would link their shields together in a *phalanx* and as long as no one broke rank they were virtually impenetrable.

What does that say to us about our commitment to each other here at NorthRidge?

2. Joy in Adversity

But even if I am being poured as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me. Philippians 2:17,18

Paul is the master of understatement. He calls his predicament simply “what has happened to me” (1:12). His “happy happenstance” included false accusations, mob violence, a shipwreck, torture, and jail time while awaiting possible execution. He thought of the indefatigable faith of his favourite church and he was full of joy (mentioned sixteen times in this short letter) while chained to a guard in a Roman prison. Paul and the Philippian church understood that joy comes from serving others, not from their circumstances. How does this paradox principle contrast with our world and its empty pursuit of happiness?

Which viewpoint does your life reflect?

3. Generosity in Deficiency

But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ. Philippians 4:18,19

The verses leading up to this well-known promise describe the results of Godly investments using banking terms: credit and debit (15), profit and interest (17), and payment in full (18). Paul is literally saying that giving is the most reliable investment – the dividends are literally “out of this world”! Giving as God directs opens the resources of heaven to not only meet the needs of the giver, but overflow a blessing through them to others.

How are you investing your life and finances in the One who is for all?