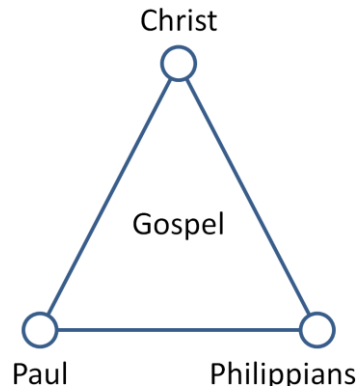


Philippians 1:1-11

1. Compare this introduction to those of other ancient letters. How is Paul's letter different?
2. How do Jesus, Paul and the Philippians interact in this passage?



3. What movement in time is present or implied in this passage?
4. In John 16, Jesus teaches his disciples how to experience lasting joy even under opposition from the world:

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love... ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.... ¹⁸“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.”

Deep, lasting happiness is the subject of an 80+ year psychological study at Harvard. One of its lead researchers reports, “Wealth, fame and career success do *not* correlate with true happiness... Good relationships keep us happier and healthier – period” (Robert Waldinger).

Paul says the Philippians are a cause of joy for him (4-5). What observations can you make from this passage about the relationship between Paul and the Philippians which might account both for Paul's joy and their lasting relationship?

5. Read 1:9-11. (a) What would the Philippians need in order to be ready for the day of Christ? (What do you need?) (b) In what way would overflowing love lead to insight? (c) What do they need discernment *about*?

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Fun non-spiritual fact: Rome had fast food. Archaeologists have unearthed “thermopolia” in Pompeii and elsewhere. These establishments had long counters with earthenware bowls recessed into the counter tops, to help keep food hot. These establishments, despite their ubiquity, had a poor reputation, perhaps due to excessive drinking; Claudius once commanded they be closed to cut down on crime. (Smithsonian.com)