

Hallelujah Anyway, Part 1

Pastor Steve Berger March 8, 2015

Introduction to the Book of Philippians

On a map

- region of Albania, Macedonia, Greece, Western Turkey

History

- gold mines of Philippi funded Alexander the Great's armies to conquer Persia in 330's, as Daniel prophesied in Daniel 8:5-8, 11:3-4
- Romans conquered in 168 b.c., divided Macedonia into four parts, Philippi became a major city and colony
- Battle of Philippi in 42 b.c. — Marc Antony and Octavian vs. Brutus and Cassius; Antony and Octavian, avenging assassination of Caesar in 44 b.c., prevail
- Romans built Via Egnatia, 700 miles long, 20 ft. wide, through middle of Philippi. Paul used this road for the first time on his second missionary journey in 50 a.d.
- Acts 16:12-40 tells us of that exciting first visit
 - finds Lydia at river, shares, saved, whole family
 - demon-possessed fortune teller delivered; masters rage; beat Paul and Silas; thrown in prison; feet in stocks
 - "but at midnight" praying and singing hymns ... **Hallelujah Anyway**
 - earthquake, doors open, guard suicidal, "do yourself no harm," "what must I do to be saved?" "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you and your whole household will be saved," saved and baptized, they depart and continue to preach
- 12 years later, 62 a.d., after much adventure, glory and persecution, Paul is in another Roman prison awaiting judgment

If you miss the fact that Paul writes this letter to the Philippians from jail, awaiting judgment and possible execution, which happened, you miss a huge part of this book

- Paul's joyful attitude, his love for God and the Philippians, his enduring faith, all while sitting in prison, for doing the right things, is both supernatural and exemplary

**Paul's is a joy, a love, and a faith that all of us MUST aspire to have;
Paul lived his life to show us that we could do it too;
that we could do "all things through Christ who strengthens us" Philippians 4:13.
We too CAN and MUST have a Hallelujah Anyway faith!**

What did a Hallelujah Anyway faith look like in Paul's life?

2 Corinthians 11:23-28

- Paul doesn't let **circumstances, suffering, Satan**, or even the very real threat of **death** steal his joy, love, or faith. Paul's faith is a **Hallelujah Anyway** faith — and so must ours be!

Paul's commitment to consistency

- 12 years earlier he's in a Philippian jail, having been beaten — praying and worshipping, God miraculously delivers him and Silas
- 12 years later, he's in prison again, for same reasons, writing to the Philippians, encouraging them to follow his example, **Hallelujah Anyway!**

On average, once every 7 verses in this book, Paul is talking about joy or rejoicing — 15 times in 104 verses.

That joy is NEVER dependent upon easy circumstances — it is in the midst of adverse circumstances. *Hallelujah Anyway!*

*If you aren't on a path of spiritual maturity that will lead you to a **Hallelujah Anyway** faith, your current faith will not endure the perilous times coming our way.*

The building blocks of acquiring and keeping a *Hallelujah Anyway* faith

Philippians 1:1

- Paul and Timothy saw themselves as **bondservants**
- definition — *doúlos* — a slave, servant, or bondservant

Deuteronomy 15:12-17

- a bondservant is someone who is motivated by a loving relationship for the Master and his house, to willingly, voluntarily, make himself the master's slave forever
 - gives up personal rights for master's will
 - realizes he's better off in master's presence than on his own, whatever that might cost him
- Paul elevates Greco/Roman usage of the word slave from something that describes an abusive relationship — to the Hebrew usage, which is relational, loving, and voluntary
- **Earmarked** — pierced through the ear to the door of the house, marked for all to see that I chose my master because I love him, and I never want to leave him, or his house, no matter what!

Bishop Handley Moule: "My Master, lead me to the door; pierce this now-willing ear once more. Thy bonds are freedom; let me stay with Thee to toil, endure, obey."¹

Paul and Timothy saw themselves as bondservants of Jesus Christ, so must we, not mere believers, but passionate bondservants of Jesus Christ! It's not optional!

Usage of "servants"

- in Matthew — Revelation; Paul, Peter, James, Jude — and Jesus

Examples from Jesus

- Matthew 25:23 — well done, good and faithful servant
 - **servants who are good and faithful enter into the joy of the Lord!**
- Mark 10:44 — whoever desires to be first shall be slave of all
 - **servants are first in the kingdom — may be last among men**
- Luke 12:37 — blessed are the servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching
 - **servants are blessed when they watch and wait for Jesus return!**
- John 13:15-16, 15:20 — a servant is not greater than his master
 - **servants do and endure whatever comes their way, like Jesus did**

¹ Herbert Lockyer, *All the Divine Names and Titles in the Bible*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988), 203

Words like good and faithful, submissive and sacrificial, waiting and watchful, dutiful and pliable (palace, persecution or prison) they all describe the mindset and lifestyle of a servant, bondservant, slave of Jesus, someone with a *Hallelujah Anyway* faith!

Personal questions to ponder

1. Are you on a pathway of spiritual maturity that is leading you to a **Hallelujah Anyway** faith?
2. Do you need to go from being a **mere believer** to a **bondservant**?
3. Have you willingly, voluntarily, surrendered you all to Jesus, **no matter the cost**?

Our confession

"I willingly, voluntarily, surrender my rights to my life, out of love for my Master and His house, I am His servant forever, to do His will, no matter what that costs me."

Discussion Questions

1. What is the significance of Paul having written the book of Philippians while in prison?
2. Without preaching a sermon, what influence did Paul have on the life of the jailer in Philippi?
3. How can Paul be so bold to state that we can do "*all things* through Christ who strengthens us"?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Do you know anyone who has lived through even a fraction of the modern-day equivalent of these experiences? How did their faith support them, or not?
5. Where did Paul's joyful attitude and **Hallelujah Anyway** faith come from?
6. What is the difference between the way we usually think of the word "servant," and the way that Paul uses it?
7. We, especially in affluent, educated Williamson County, have a hard time giving up our own personal rights, our wills ... especially to someone who would be our master. How do we overcome that?
8. How can we maintain joy that is never dependent on circumstances?
9. Do you need to develop a **Hallelujah Anyway** attitude about any particular circumstances in your life today?
10. Are you ready to do whatever it takes to have that kind of faith? What will it take for you?

Click on "House of Prayer" on www.gracechapel.net to fill out a prayer request. We will pray for requests for one month and at our weekly prayer meetings. See you this Tuesday, March 10, at 6:30 p.m.!