

Sermon: More Important Than You'll Ever Know

Text: Philippians 1:1-11

Discussion Questions:

- Paul addresses this letter in verse 1: “To all God’s holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons.” A closer look at this salutation indicates three specific groups of people—“God’s holy people”; “Overseers”; and “Deacons.”
 - Who are “God’s holy people”? Who does this group include? Why do you think Paul includes the word “holy”? What does holy mean? Do you consider yourself to be one of “God’s holy people”? Why or why not? Would it change anything about the way you live if you constantly viewed yourself as one of God’s holy people?
 - What is the difference between an “overseer” (or “elder”) and a “deacon”? What has been your personal experience with these various groups of people in churches you have attended? How have these groups functioned? How SHOULD they function?
 - The footnote in the NIV on this verse—specifically on the word “deacon”—states: “The word *deacons* refers here to Christians designated to serve with the overseers/elders of the church in a variety of ways; similarly in Romans 16:1 and 1 Tim. 3:8,12.” Read these additional verses, and discuss what you believe to be the difference between overseers, deacons and elders.
- What do verses 3-5 tell us about how Paul feels about the people in the church in Philippi? How does this set the tone for the entire letter? How does this differ from what we’ve seen when we studied Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians?
- Are you confident of the fact that what God has started in your life, He will carry it out to completion (v. 6)? Discuss what you believe this to mean.
- What does verse 7 tell us about Paul’s current circumstances?
- Summarize Paul’s prayer in verses 9-11. What do you love about this simple prayer. Who might you pray this prayer over right now? Why?