

Partakers with His People

Scripture Reading: Philippians 1:1-11

An extension of our participation / our fellowship with Christ, His gospel, and partaking of His divine nature is to participate / to fellowship with Christ's people and to partake of the Spirit of Christ that is within other believers / other followers of Christ. Romans 8:16 says, *"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that **we** are children of God."* This verse tells us two things:

- 1) Christ's Spirit within us causes us to know that we, as individual believers, are saved and belong to Christ (I John 3:1-3, 23-24; 4:12-13; 5:10-13).
- 2) Christ's Spirit within us helps us to bear witness with others that they also ("we" - together) belong to Christ (I John 1:1-4; 5:1-2; Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 4:1-6; 6:23-24; Philippians 2:1-3).

Philippians 1:1-11 – Joy, Prayers, Labors, Grace, Love

Our Scripture reading in this lesson demonstrates Paul's great love for the children of God.

Philippians 1:3 – Our relationship with God's people is something that brings joy (Philippians 4:1 cp. I Thessalonians 2:19-20; II Thessalonians 1:3-4; John 15:11-12; Romans 15:5-7, 13).

Philippians 1:4, 9-11 – Our relationship with God's people evokes prayerful concern (Philippians 4:1-7 cp. Ephesians 6:18; II Timothy 2:22; James 5:16).

Philippians 1:5 – Our relationship with God's people is a *"fellowship / partnership"* based on the truth of the gospel (Romans 1:1-12, 15; 16:25-27; I Timothy 3:15; II John 1:1-2).

Philippians 1:6 – Our Relationship with God's people has a divine source, giving us assurance that the relationship is permanent / eternal and worth the investment of our time and effort (Romans 8:14-23; I Corinthians 15:51-58; I Thessalonians 4:13 – 5:11).

Philippians 1:7 – Our relationship with God’s people is a working relationship. The gospel brings a host of challenges (“bonds / chains / imprisonment” cp. *Philippians 1:27-30; Hebrews 13:3*) and labors (Romans 15:30-33; I Thessalonians 1:2-10; Hebrews 6:9-12) bringing us into the same need for God’s grace / the same experience of God’s grace (Philippians 1:7 – “*partakers of my grace*” cp. Hebrews 4:16 [“Let *us...that we...*”]; II Timothy 2:1; II Corinthians 12:7-10).

Philippians 1:8 – This camaraderie with God’s people creates a great “*yearning / longing*” which comes from the heart (KJV – “bowels” i.e. “*great affection*”) by the love of Christ (Philippians 2:1; John 13:34-35; II Corinthians 5:14-15; Ephesians 5:1-2; I Peter 1:22).

Conclusion:

The gospel brings new birth. The new birth brings us a new life, which has a new agenda, new relationships, and a new set of affections. We need to develop our participation with the people of God, by growing in a mature love which comes from Christ (II Corinthians 5:14-21; Colossians 3:1-17; I Thessalonians 4:1, 9-10; I Peter 1: 22-25).