



SERIES: Philippians (May / June)

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Saturday, May 15, 2021

Scripture: Philippians 1:25-26

TITLE: The Source of Growing Faith and Joy

Helping others grow is a passion of mine. In fact, my mission statement is to introduce people to Jesus, so they might reach their God-given potential. My friend and mentor, Dr. Michael Frisina, his motto is “to help you do what you do better than anyone else.” It’s all about growth. The Apostle Paul’s motto was “to live is Christ and to die is gain.” The outflow of that purpose was to help his spiritual brothers and sisters grow in their faith and joy of the Lord.

How do I know this? Let’s continue in Philippians 1 for the answer:

“Knowing this, I am convinced that I will remain alive so I can continue to help all of you grow and experience the joy of your faith. ²⁶ And when I come to you again, you will have even more reason to take pride in Christ Jesus because of what he is doing through me.” (Phil. 1:25-26, NLT)

Paul has just journaled a very personal struggle: the battle of the desires to serve the Lord, or to die and be in His presence. And we find that he has settled the matter. He is convinced that he is to stay and serve. Why? So he can help the church grow and experience the joy of their faith. A better translation is “for your progress and joy in the faith.”

There are two progressions here that Paul is hoping to help them with: the growth in their faith and the growth or progress in their joy. It’s hard to have real joy without faith. It’s hard to have authentic faith that doesn’t result in joy. But these aren’t natural. They are supernatural and available to the believer.

But here’s the truth of the matter, growth doesn’t come without a price. A diamond is developed under incredible pressure. A pearl doesn’t develop overnight. It’s an irritable piece of sand that takes time and attention to develop. It’s the same with faith and joy. The growth is possible when our confidence, or as Paul puts it, “pride in Christ,” is fully realized. If you want to grow deep roots of faith in joy, it all comes down to pride in Christ.

Do you know Christ? Do you love Christ? Three times Jesus asked Peter, “Do you love me?” Loving Christ is the root of our love for each other. So when we are rooted in Christ, we become unwavering in the storm, wind, scorching sun, or the perfect climate.

So here’s my challenge for you today: Love and grow. Do you love Christ? No, really...do you love Christ? Do you take pride in Christ alone? Is He the reason for your hope in all circumstances? If not, why not? Ask yourself. Where is it you struggle to find that confidence in Him?

Until that is settled, growth in faith and joy will struggle. Once you've settled that pride in Christ, then begin to grow. Continue to come back to the Bible for God's instruction, encouragement, and hope. Come back to the people of God, and pray for and encourage each other. When we are confident in Christ, our faith will grow, and our joy will overflow.

When this happens, friend, you know we will win the day.