

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

September 22, 2019

SPEAKER

Brian Frost

SERIES

I Found Joy

PART

5

TITLE

I Found Joy In Unity

SCRIPTURE

Philippians 1:27-2:4



© 2019 Providence Baptist Church (Raleigh, NC)

Sermon transcripts may be used for preaching and teaching purposes, but may not be published or sold. While generally accurate, parts of this transcript may contain errors.

Providence reserves the right to correct and/or remove a transcript at any time.

Well, it is great to see all of you. I hope that you have had a great week, and if you are new here with us, welcome. We are thrilled that you have joined us.

If this is your first time in something like this, let me just tell you just a bit about who we are. We're very much like you. We're just people, we've all made mistakes and we found in a person named Jesus Christ hope to forgive us and to give us life. And so we love to come and worship him. We're really glad that you're here.

And each time that we come, we look at his word. We love the Bible here. We believe that it's true and so when we meet, instead of us talking, we love to read what he has said to us and to help us sort of grasp what it means. And so, that's what we're going to do right now.

But let me ask you something, all of you, and that's this, have you ever been part of a team that really struggled to fulfill or to make progress in its central cause, primarily because the team could not get along? It may be at work to where there's a product that you need to actually build, or manufacture, or market, or sell, and for whatever reason you're struggling to get things off the ground simply because there's so much backbiting among the team that have all aligned to say, "This is how we're going to spend our time in order to do this."

It happens in the home with parenting, it happens in schools, it happens everywhere, is that we look at something, we see this cause that's worth our time, it's worthy, it's important to us, and we find that there's other people that it's worthy and important to them, and then we put our hands to the task and we find that the relationships with those teammates, they can be strained.

And it's interesting is, it can happen in things that have nothing to do with God and everything to do with God. Years ago, right after college, I spent six months down in Zimbabwe and just an absolutely remarkable time. Lots of amazing people I was able to meet, and some of the most hospitable people I've ever met in my entire life. I had the opportunity to share the gospel with hundreds and hundreds of people who prayed to receive Christ.

It was just an amazing six months, but one of the most sad memories of that time, was there was three missionary families that were all there for the same cause, they were all there to make disciples of all nations. And they saw these people who did not have the Gospel and they said, "We need to move to a hard place to work with people who may at first be resistant, but we're going to tell the Gospel to them."

And over a series of years, by the time I had arrived, these three families didn't like each other. And so, routinely in vehicles and in different meals individually, I noticed almost immediately they didn't eat meals together, ever. And it was such a sad thing, it was such a distracting thing, we would be going to share the Gospel in a school with one of the families and myself, and all of a sudden we'd be thinking about what we're going to do when we get in front of all of these students in school, and they'd start talking about some of their resentment about another teammate.

And over six months' time, there were certainly many opportunities to share the Gospel and God continued to use all of us in all of our brokenness, but one of the saddest things, and one of the most piercing memories of that time to me, was how distracting our discord with ourselves can be to the mission of God.

You see, there is a special pain that's felt by Christians who were embroiled in discord. It makes sense. We've received grace and God has told us to give grace. We've received forgiveness and God says, "Because I've forgiven you now go and forgive other people."

We know he's the Prince of peace, we know that he's told us that we'll be his sons and daughters, if we are peacemakers. And yet, we find ourselves with our teammates in this mission of God, to make disciples of all nations. We find ourselves sometimes at odds with each other, because we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We all affirm what we read in Psalm 133 when he says, "How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity."

If you're wondering sort of what that looks like, let me give you just one little picture from some rowers. Just imagine it says this, "How good and pleasant it is when rowers row in unity." How much more every single one of those strokes that they take is beneficial to the whole when they choose to yield to their own preferences and timing, and choose to row together.

It's such a difficult thing, and the fact is, is I know that in this room right now, is that some of you are uptight with somebody. Many of you, maybe right now, you already feel embroiled and maybe even this thought of, "He's going to talk about this whole broken relationship thing for all these minutes, and I'm just going to sit here uncomfortable."

Some of you have already are, in fact, some of the people who you may be embroiled with, they may be sitting next to you right now. All right, it may be a sibling or it may be a spouse or it may be a friend. And what I want to ask you to do, I'm going to pray for us right now, I'm just going to ask that God is going to be gracious to us, to help us to see the value that he has placed in unity and ultimately how much joy is available to us if we'll participate with him in pursuing it.

So let me pray for us.

Father in heaven, we thank you for your grace in our life. And I pray for each one of us, God, we all know what it's like to be at odds with somebody. And we know how distracting it is to the more important things of our life. Now even though we know other things are more important and more eternal, for whatever reason the seed of offense, it just seems to grow bigger and bigger in time if it's not dealt with.

And so I pray that you would be gracious to each one of us, that you would help us to have a heart that's inclined to want to listen to what you say in your word. That you would inspire us, that you would draw us in, that you would help us to see how attractive and appealing it is for us to humble ourselves in order to be unified, in order to live worthy of the Gospel. So would you speak through weakness in my self and give us clarity? We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

So we are in the first chapter of Philippians. I would love for you to look there with me, there's lots of Bibles in the chairs near you, so if you don't have one there's one there for you. And if you don't have one at home, take that home as a gift. It's important for you to be able to see it with your eyes. And so whether that's on your phone or in book form, I would love for you to look at it.

We're in a series, we're just marching right through these verses. And we happen to be up to chapter one, verse 27. And we're going to go up to until chapter two, verse four here this morning.

But let me tell you something about the book. It's a fascinating study because he's in a really hard place and he keeps talking about how joyful he is, how he feels joy, how he knows joy because he's near Jesus. And how he's practicing joy by rejoicing, by spilling joy out of his mouth. And it's coming naturally, it's not fake, it's not artificial, it's not a show. It's just real. There's joy in spite of his circumstances.

And in spite of the fact that he's in prison, falsely accused, chained to a soldier, and uncertain about how things are going to go. Okay? And the one last week that we looked at, those verses right before this, he says, "Look, you know, I don't know if I'm going to live or die, I don't know if I'm going to be out of prison or if I'm going to be martyred in this prison. I don't know what is going to happen to me."

And it's interesting that in spite of all of that, he's speaking about joy. And then in chapter one, verse 27, instead of constantly looking internal at all of the struggle, the fact that he might die that day in prison, he doesn't know, but he turns from his predicament to theirs.

And he says this, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the Gospel, and not frightened in any way or anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.

"For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have. So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

And hopefully you were able to sort of pick up in chapter two, verse two. He says, "Complete my joy by doing something." Now this is remarkable. He's already said, "I have joy, I feel joy, I know joy, I'm practicing joy by rejoicing. And yet, there's something that you can do in Philippi that would affect and complete my joy in Rome while I'm sitting in prison." Now that's a remarkable statement. That he believes that something that they can do can actually affect and complete his joy in a different city.

It's really a beautiful thing, and ultimately, we have to assume that if their unity can affect his joy in a different city, that their unity can also affect their joy in Philippi. And if that's true, then we can also assume that our joy will also be affected by our unity.

So what does the hope, what does the possibility of having a completed kind of joy, a full joy, an abounding joy, what does that hope motivate us to do? That's what I want to answer. And the first thing it does, is joy motivates us to live worthy of the Gospel. It motivates us, joy motivates us to live worthy of the Gospel.

He says in verse 27, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ." Now we use the word worthy or worth as a term of measurement. And when you think about a measuring tool, perhaps the best way that I can show it to you is in a scale. And it's not the scale that you step on and you see a number. It's the scale where you put something on one side and then you have to find something that weighs as much as that in order to balance out the scale.

And so we say things like, "He's worth every penny." What does that mean? It means that the output of that individual's work equals, it weighs as much in our eyes, as the resources that we have to give that individual to do that work. When we say things like, "He lived unworthily of his office." What we mean by that is, we say that the worth of his office should have compelled him to live differently.

And so, when we look at a judge, or a principal, or a pastor, or a leader, or a policeman, or whatever it is who has a role, who has conferred authority to them, and we place that on one side of the scale, we naturally look not only at how they do that role, but even their personal life, and then we make a judgment if that scale is balanced. Are they living worthily of it or are they not?

And he says to us, "Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel." The Gospel is on one side, and our life is on the other. Our proclamation is on one side and our practice is on the other. You see, I may just give you one practical example. Sometimes of when it doesn't happen so well.

So a few weeks ago I went to the state game, I had a friend who gave us great tickets. And so we went as a family and we were a little bit late, so I dropped them off sort of at the gate, and I kept driving to find a spot. And so I was walking by myself and I was walking behind about five or six college students, who at a noon game were already drunk out of their head. Okay? There was one guy and he had two beers in his back pockets, and he had one in each hand. And he was ready for the game, right?

And it was clear that he had already ... well, he was drunk, okay? There was no doubt about it. He was loud and he was obnoxious and he was just being rude.

And every 20 feet or so for this game, they put little signs with the state logo in the grass, just to make it festive. And every time that he would get up to one, he'd walk and he would just kick it up into the air and it would just go sailing. And they would laugh.

What was interesting though is that in that context, one of the girls who was in their group, who was laughing while it was happening, she was mocking. And how she mocked was this, she said, "Listen, you've got to represent." Now she had no intention to doing so, but internally there was something within her that says that we are a part of something that is bigger than us. And yet how we are behaving right now is casting a reflection in the eyes of other people on what we represent.

And this is what he says. He says, "Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel." Now the words, "manner of life," is actually translated from one Greek word. It's the word [foreign language 00:15:44], it's where we get words like policy and politic and police. And it's interesting, is that verb comes from the noun form [foreign language 00:15:56], which means city. In other words, manner of life literally means that there is a city that people live in, and then there is a behavior that must be constrained, policed, policed, in order to live worthily of that city. That's what it means, manner of life.

And what we're told in Philippians 3:20, is that when we trusted Jesus Christ as our Savior, is that we were actually given a new citizenship to a new city, and that city is called heaven. And that citizenship was not secured by our effort, but by Jesus Christ, who came to this earth, who died for our sin though he had none of his own. He was buried in a grave and then he rose from the dead to prove that he had the power over sin and death. And then he invited us to believe in him, and all who do, we're told in the book John, become his children. Sons and daughters of God, we become part of his family. He lives in heaven and we become citizens of heaven. A new citizenship.

And chapter two, verse one tells us that there are unique and stunning benefits of this citizenship. It says that we receive the encouragement of being with Christ. That he walks beside us, that he'll never leave us or forsake us. He says that being a citizen of heaven means that we're comforted by his love. A love that literally says that nothing can separate us from his love. Which means nothing you can do as a Christian can take away your passport to heaven. Your citizenship is sealed forever.

One of the benefits, it says, is participation or fellowship with the Spirit, where the Spirit of God among those who believe in Jesus comes and lives within our heart to convict us when we're off course. To seal us, to help us, to teach us, to motivate us, to pray for us, to intercede for us. He says that not only that, but we also receive affection in Jesus Christ. He loves you so much and sympathy. Sympathy. He says that we have a sympathetic high priest in heaven who knows what it's like to go through the challenges on this earth.

And yet he intercedes for us night and day.

It was all secured by Jesus Christ and what Paul's point is this, he's saying, "I'm urging you, the church in Philippi, to police yourself, constrain yourself, policy yourself, in order to represent God's city of which you are now a citizen, because Jesus suffered for your sake."

You see, this is not a call to deserve our place with God. It's a call to recognize how much our place with God deserves. And to recognize and to determine that we want to reflect the nobility of who we represent. And so let me encourage us, on the basis of verse 27, to determine, to reflect the nobility of knowing Christ.

Providence, he has called us to represent him in the world. He tells us, Paul writes in another book, he says, "We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us." We're the window by which people look at what heaven is like. There's no greater honor, which is why Paul in another letter that he wrote about the same time in prison that he wrote Philippians. Ephesians 4:1, he says, "Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called."

He's saying, let your practice weigh as much as your proclamation. And the fact is, is that every single person in this room, to a man and a woman, boy and girl, knows that we all stumble, and know that there's no part of our life that weighs as much as the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Every one in this room knows we fall short, there's no way that my life will ever properly and truly and perfectly represent the holiness and generosity and mercy and grace that's bound up in heaven and is given to us through the Gospel.

Which is why confession and repentance publicly is a part of our proclamation. Where when we fail, we go to people and we fill in the gap between what they have heard us saying and what they see. And we say, "You know what? I was wrong. Would you forgive me? That's not the way, that's not the way to live."

And so let's determine to reflect the nobility. And you would assume, on the basis of this, that right after verse 20 that there would just a long litany, just a long list of things of, "Okay, now in this area of life, and in this arena of life, this is how you live worthy of the Gospel." And he does that, but it's interesting, there's something has to be first.

There has to be priority number one. The one thing that says, "Now look, you can do a lot of things in order to reflect Jesus Christ, but if this is missing," this is where he's going to go, "but if this is missing, they're never going to get a clear picture." And you know where he goes? He goes to unity.

And so let's think about this second main truth, and that is that joy motivates us to pursue unity. He says, "Look, no matter what happens to me, no matter what happens to you, whether I come or am absent, I don't know what's going to happen. But I'm begging you this, stand firm in one Spirit, with one mind, and strive side by side." He's stacking up metaphors to talk about being together and not divided.

And he talks about something, which we'll get to in a moment, and then he comes back in chapter two and he circles back around. And he goes, "Look, if you're in Christ, if you know the value, if you've felt his love, if you've felt his comfort, if any of this resembles, if it resounds in your heart," he says, "then complete my joy. Complete my joy by having this same love, same mind, being in full accord with one mind."

Now, perhaps the most amazing thing to me is that Paul recognizes that they are facing opponents in Philippi, and Paul gives no sympathy whatsoever to them for it. There's no alarm bell that goes off within his heart that causes him to fear and go, "Oh no! The people of Philippi, they got some opponents, they're going to be frightened by those opponents. What's going to happen? Let me write them."

No. You know what he says to them? He says, "Don't be afraid of them, this is a clear sign, meaning the fact that they're opposed to you because you associate with Jesus Christ and they oppose you because of it, is a clear sign of their destruction and of your salvation." And he says this, "Oh, and by the way, just so you know who's running the show, and all this is from God. It's all from God."

And then to make the point absolutely clear, he uses the word for or because. "For it has been granted to you." That word granted is a verb that comes from a root word from grace. It's been grace given to you. Well, where does grace come from? It comes from God. God has given you his grace. And what does that grace look like? To not only believe in his Son, Jesus Christ, but to suffer for his sake.

So you don't sense any alarm within him. You see, persecution is sort of like heat to a kernel of popcorn. You heat it up, it ignites the gas that's already inside the kernel, until it pushes that gas out, breaks the shell, cracks through, and grows. The kingdom of God has always grown when the church is persecuted. Always. He's not afraid of us suffering. Hear that. He says, "Because it's ultimately at the hand of God."

But it's amazing how alarming it is to him, in each of his books he does this. In Ephesians, he says the same thing. And he goes, "Now where should I start with? I'll tell you what, be unified." He says, "Be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. For there is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, and one faith, and baptism, and one God and one Father of all." We cannot represent the oneness of God by being two. By being divided.

You see, for Paul though, this unity, it was like he cared so much about them and I think this is why. When you're persecuted for your faith, you happen to know it. It's pretty obvious. But disunity is like cancer, it's allowed to grow sometimes beyond the vision of our eyes, until it actually can take the life.

And the same thing can happen in a church. The same thing can happen with people who have rallied together for a central thing, a cause that's bigger than them. And yet, they're unraveling because there's a cancer of disunity within their hearts that they can't work together.

It's interesting, on three different occasions in our text he talks about one mind. And so I really kind of focused on that. I'm like, "Why did he keep saying one mind and how was that possible? One mind, does that mean we have to think identically on everything, every nuance of theology, every practice of how we do it?" I don't believe it is and I don't believe so for three reasons. One is because he wrote Romans. And in Romans 14 and 15, he actually says, "Now look, in the areas where God is not specifically forbidden or instructed something, and there's differing views on how Christians should practice that," he gives instructions. And so he assumes that we're not going to all agree on every practice. Every practice that's not specifically forbidden or instructed within scripture.

And then in chapter three of Philippians, he's going to come and he says, "You know what? We're all learning from Jesus Christ, but we all learn at different speeds. And so we need to be patient with one another because you may be somewhere and they're not there yet and that's okay."

And then in our text, he even says, he says, "Look, let each of you look not to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." Well that just means that we have two different interests. I have an interest and you have one. But I need to defer for your interest.

I believe ultimately what it means then for us to have one mind is wrapped up in another book that he wrote when he's in prison, and that was Colossians. When he says, "Look, if you've been raised with Christ, then seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." Look up, look to him, look God-ward. And he says, "Set your minds on things that are above and not on things that are on the earth."

What does this mean? It means for us to have one mind, that we open up a Bible and we seek God's will and we yield together to what God tells us in his word. And in matters where clarity is lacking, that we humble ourselves and forbear in love for the good of what we know to be certain, and that is Jesus Christ as Lord.

And so let me urge us, let's search our hearts for the importance of unity. And what I mean by that is, I want to ask you right now to think about your conflict right now, if you're in one. Think about your most recent conflict. And let me ask you this, did at any point in the conflict when you were interacting with this person, has the representation of heaven and God's overwhelming passion for unity, was it the clearest passion in your heart at that moment? How important is unity in your marriage? In your friendship? In your life group? In this church?

You see, Jesus let us in this amazing reality, and that is that when he was on this earth, he actually prayed and he says, “Father, may they be one even as we are one.” You know what means? That means that you and I, those of us who are in Christ, we are citizens of the city that is unified at its highest levels, and called to live worthily of it.

And so, let me just say a few words to kids in the room. Jesus gets torn up when you fight with your brother and sister. And husbands and wives, who though we’re maybe bigger, but sometimes just as childish, he gets torn up in our bickering and discord. How important is it to you that unity is one of the central characteristics that someone can look at and go, “That person was a peacemaker. That person chooses unity over his or her preference.” You see, we will never reflect our Lord when we’re divided. And we will never be focused on our mission when we are embroiled in discord.

Well that leads us to the third thing that joy motivates, and that is sort of the application. Well, okay, if we’re supposed to pursue unity, how do we do that? You can’t go buy it, you can’t go do it, I mean do it. Do unity right now. What is that? No, unity is sort of like dew that appears in the morning when the conditions and the atmosphere are right. And that’s what he tells us to do next is to focus on the conditions.

And so joy motivates us to show preference to one another. He says, “Do nothing,” now just pause for a second. Think about that word, “Do nothing.” That’s broad. “Out of selfish ambition.” Ambition is a drive, selfishness is my own, to get my own, to win the argument, to set up my throne in this relationship. It’s the drive to get our way.

The word conceit is a very different word. Now, I think there’s something about conceit, at least the idea of it, is actually kind of funny to me, and so I’m going to hopefully show you a little picture that’s going to help you see. The word conceit actually comes from two words that are put together into a compound word and it actually means empty glory. Okay?

In other words, we try to glorify ourselves even though there’s nothing for anyone to go, “Wow!” And so what do we have to do? Well, we have to inflate ourselves like a puffer fish. Okay? And so we get all barbs, and we’ve got some poison in us, and we inflate ourselves. But mostly it’s just a lot of air. Conceit is what takes place when you walk in the doors with an attitude of, “Here I am,” instead of, “There you are.” It’s the attitude that says, “I’m going to puff myself up, I’m going to be artificial so that people will think highly of me.”

And he says this, “Do nothing,” think about how comprehensive that is, “nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit. But in humility, count others more significant than yourself.” To serve, to take the low place, to choose their preference even over yours, so that you can be unified.

Let me say this though, there is a limit to unity. You say, “Wait a minute, there’s a limit to unity?” Yeah, there is. There’s a limit to unity. And we know this because God is not unified with everybody on the earth right now. Okay? Psalm 85:10 says that righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Some people, they want peace, but they throw righteousness and truth away, and that’s not true peace.

Let me give you an example, John 14:6 says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” If you want peace with everyone in the world, you’re not going to have it, unless you part with your conviction that Jesus is the only way. And so here’s the rule, the rule is this, is that when, if truth and righteousness are ever in jeopardy, then we do not yield and therefore we are not perfectly unified with that person. We can still love them, but we’re not going to be unified with them.

But if truth and righteousness are not in jeopardy, which is where we spend 99% of all of our relational tensions, then it is better to yield and have unity than to get our way. Which is why he says, “Let each of you look not to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

So let me encourage us, last thing, is let’s humble ourself for the joy. For our joy and for the mission. Let’s humble ourself for our own joy, to complete our joy, and for the mission.

Now, I want to do one example of this, of how would we actually go about doing this. And it’s an example that fortunately right now at Providence, it’s not hot spot, which is great. But historically, probably over the last 30 years, if there’s one thing that’s characterized worship services like this, it’s one of the saddest things that you could ever call it, but they call it a worship war.

You ever heard of that? Worship wars? In other words, they’re warring over how do we sing to the Lord. What style, what preference of music. It has to be one of the greatest indictments that there’s actually a phrase that’s been coined to talk about how Christians embroiled in discord won’t worship the one person they all know they should be worshipping. It’s just an absolute travesty.

And so let’s talk about that, okay? So when we collectively as a people, with one mind, all right? We’re seeking him, we’re looking up, we see within the scriptures, we see him. And we see that Jesus is worth our song. To be in unity with this congregation, you have to agree that Jesus is worth our song, that he is the worthy one.

Then what happens is we look back down on the earth and we say, “Now how do we do this?” And we don’t all agree on the kind of songs, or the volume of the songs that we should be singing. So what do we do in that moment? Let me encourage you with these things, okay? This is the sequence of the sermon, we’re just going to work it all the way through.

With one mind we decide to reflect the worth of the Gospel. Second, with one mind we prioritize unity for the sake of our joy and his mission. Third, with one mind we refuse to assign moral superiority to our preference. We do this all the time. You say, "What does that mean?" It means that when we like something, we say, "Now this is right." And then when someone else likes something else and we say, "Well, this is right," what we're assuming is then that's not right. Or another way to say that is, "You're wrong, I'm right." And now there's moral superiority. It's just a preference that we've said, "This is the way I like it." And what we should say is, "You know what? This is the way that I prefer and this is the way that you prefer."

And now, fourth, with one mind we take the low place and show preference to one another. Acknowledging, so long as everyone's still wanting to sing to Jesus, that we are unified under him. See, it's sort of like a football team at the beginning of the season. You've got a lot of players with some egos and some preferences and ideas of how to move the ball down the field. But then when it matters every year, typically the Super Bowl champion team is the team that eventually at some point they see a greater good than their own. And they begin to yield to one another and play as a team.

And perhaps one of the most encouraging things I can say to you today, is at Providence today and literally a thousand directions I see this in you, maybe one of the most refreshing things is that when I'm speaking through this, I don't have anybody in mind. You yield all the time to one another and I am so grateful.

And let me just say for those who haven't trusted Christ, who don't know the benefits of chapter two, verse one, I want you to know that you do not have a deeper need than to trust Christ. And you will never find a better offer than the one that's been given by Jesus Christ. You see, if you come upon an accident and you see a driver within the car who is now bleeding out, and at the very same time you see a parenting book in the backseat, that's not the time to talk about parenting. That's the time to stop the blood and to give blood.

And that's what Jesus did. He didn't primarily come to give you an instruction manual. He came to give us blood, his blood. He went to a cross to die for our sin. And then because he has authority over all things, as the Son of God he rose from the dead. And he says that if you will trust in him, if you will admit you cannot save yourself, if you'll believe in him and confess him as Lord of your life, the Bible says that you'll be saved.

But the benefits that we read of, encouragement of Christ, and comfort from his love, and participation with his Spirit, and sympathy and affection, they'll be yours. And so I urge you, not just today, but right now, would you trust Christ?

So let me pray for us.

Father in heaven, I pray for those that are contemplating that invitation. That you would lead them even now to see that it's true. And help them to lean towards you and place their faith in your Son. I pray for those who are wondering about a situation, maybe a relationship right now where they feel embroiled, where they feel bitter towards somebody. After hearing all of this, maybe their emotions are compounded and I pray that you would be merciful to them to help sort those out. We know that you're worthy and we confess our sin in not giving a perfect reflection of how worthy you are.

So would you fill us with the Spirit? Would you forgive us? Would you cleanse us? As we sing to you now and we give, the desire of our heart is that these would be expressions of our faith and love for you that would take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. And so, we sing to you now and we pray this in Jesus' name, amen.



© 2019 Providence Baptist Church (Raleigh, NC)
Sermon transcripts may be used for preaching and teaching purposes, but may not be published or sold. While generally accurate, parts of this transcript may contain errors.
Providence reserves the right to correct and/or remove a transcript at any time.