

EAST CAMBRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

"A first century church in the 21st century"

Bible Reading Plan

Week 8

- Lev 8-11; Ps 110; *Heb 4*
- Lev 12-14; Ps 111; *Heb 5*
- Lev 15-18; Ps 31; *Heb 6*
- Lev 19-20; *Heb 7*
- Lev 21-23; *Heb 8*

Leading Services

Announcements: Larry L.

Morning:

Song Leader: Mike V.

Opening Prayer: Richard L.

Lord's Table: Brock G.

Asst By:

Closing Prayer: Zack V.

Evening: No Services

Song Leader:

Opening Prayer:

Closing Prayer:

Scripture Reading:
(Zephaniah 3.8-13)

Sermons:

AM: Forgiveness

PM:



Philippi

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:3-6).

One of the greatest joys an evangelist has is a church for which he can be truly thankful. It is a great encouragement to a preacher to know there are brethren who will come to his aid in times of distress or persecution. It renews the spirit to feel the weight of the daily burdens lightened by the helping hands of loving saints of like precious faith.

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Philippi: A Church To Be Thankful For

Zealous To Support Paul: The Philippian brethren were ardent supporters of the apostle from the first day (Phil. 1:5). How different they were from the Corinthians from whom Paul received nothing though he gave them his all (2 Cor. 11:7-10; 12:14-17). These brethren supported Paul in Philippi (Acts 16:15), at Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16), in Achaia at Athens and Corinth (Phil. 4:15; Acts 17:13-16) and in the imperial prison at Rome (Phil. 1:7; 4:14-19). They supported Paul out of there "deep poverty" while undergoing a "great trial of affliction" (2 Cor. 8:2). Evangelists ought to be grateful for what they receive from the brethren.

While what the evangelist receives is earned (2 Cor. 11:8), it is no less a matter of generosity and sacrifice on the part of the brethren. They work, they earn and they have bills, needs and wants. Yet, they give. They could have more for themselves if they gave less, but their commitment to Christ is greater than their desires for additional comforts and pleasures (Phil. 1:6; 4:10; 2 Cor. 9:8-11).

Worked By His Side: The Philippians did not just "throw money" at Paul, Luke or Timothy expecting "so much preach for so much pay." No, the Philippians were "yokefellows," "fellow laborers," "fellow soldiers" and "companions in labor" with Paul (Phil. 2:25; 4:3). These brethren had actually helped in the work of evangelizing. Lydia opened her house and received the church (Acts 16:40). Epaphroditus was an evangelist, as well as their messenger who risked his life to carry a gift to Paul (Phil. 2:25). Clement was a teacher of the gospel (Phil. 1:1; 4:1-2). Euodias and Syntyche were served as well (cf. Rom. 16:1-2).

Too many "in the pew" are under the impression that preachers are hired to do their evangelism. There are quite a few preachers under the impression that their sole responsibility is to "fill the pulpit." The evangelist and the church are in fellowship together in the great work of evangelism. The church shares in the financial needs of the preacher, but also in the work. Elders and deacons have a responsibility to teach and preach the word (1 Tim. 5:17; Acts 21:8) and to train others in that work (1 Tim. 3:10; Titus 1:9-10).

Not Ashamed of Paul: When Paul wrote the church at Philippi his popularity was greatly diminished. He was in prison in Rome (Phil. 1:7) deserted by some of his former companions and alone (2 Tim. 4:9-17). The sect of the circumcision continued to harass Paul (Phil. 1:15-18). Their desire was to destroy him if possible. They made false charges against him and misrepresented his doctrine (Gal. 5:10-12; Phil. 3:18-19; Rom. 3:8). Some of the brethren were turning away from Paul (2 Tim. 1:15). However, the Philippians were remaining steadfast in their former love (Phil. 1:7; 4:14). They unashamedly acknowledged their debt to Paul as the herald of their salvation (Phil. 2:17).

There will be times when an unpopular stand must be taken because it is the right place to stand (Gal. 2:11-12). Men of influence and importance will try and persuade you to do otherwise for the sake of your influence (Gal. 2:6). Weak brethren will tremble because they fear being "labeled" (Acts 28:22). Former stalwarts will cave into pressure because the majority is against you (Gal. 2:13).

When we are ashamed of those who faithfully stand for Christ, we reveal that we are ashamed of the Lord (2 Tim. 1:8). The Lord needs churches today that will support preachers who choose to suffer rather than to practice compromise. We need brethren who will sacrifice to see that those who are standing for the truth have their needs met abundantly. Elders that fear God more than they fear men—leading saints to hold up the hands of the righteous in defense of the faith.

A Good Church: Philippi was certainly a church to be thankful for—evangelistic, sacrificial and loyal. What more could one want in a congregation of God's people? Is this church such a body of believers? Are we all working? Have we sacrificed for truth? Will we stand when the time comes.

- Jeff Asber