

Sermon Title: Even If I Don't Know What's Next [Philippians 1:1-11]**by: Pastor Alan Hannah****Scriptures: Philippians 1:1-11 NLT**

¹This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God's holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the church leaders and deacons. ²May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

³Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. ⁴Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, ⁵for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. ⁶And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. ⁷So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. ⁸God knows how much I love you and long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. ¹⁰For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. ¹¹May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

Big Idea: When the future is unclear, God's faithfulness is our anchor.**1. When the future is foggy, anchor yourself in what you know.**

Joy is found in keeping your eyes on what God is doing, even when you can't see what God is doing in YOUR situation.

2. When circumstances are uncertain, God's faithfulness is our anchor.

God doesn't promise they won't face uncertainty, He promises He'd be WITH them in it. God's faithfulness isn't dependent on your feelings. Paul prays for transformation. He prays for character, not comfort.

3. When you don't know what's next, pray for what matters most.

Paul would say to you what he said to the Philippians... anchor yourself in what you KNOW.

- **You know who you belong to.** You're His.
- **You know God's character.** You know He's faithful to finish what He starts.
- **You know there's a day coming when Jesus returns,** and it will all make sense.

Live like Paul lived.

- Focus on what matters. Pray for transformation.
- Choose joy not because your circumstances changed, but because your perspective did.
- Look outward instead of inward.
- Trust God's faithfulness more than your feelings.

Life Group Discussion Questions

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WARM-UPS:

1. What was your favorite memory from Christmas and New Years? Why?
2. How was the COVID-19 shut down disorienting to you or steal your joy? What uncertainty did it create?

DISCUSSION:

1. Describe a time when you had to deal with significant uncertainty or a difficult situation, yet experienced joy even when you didn't know what was next? What or who helped you during that time?
2. Think about a time when someone's consistent support helped you through a difficult challenge. Who helped you and what specific actions made their support and encouragement so valuable in your faith journey?
3. When you pray for your friends or community, what are the top two or three things you most often ask God for on their behalf?
4. What challenges you about the apostle Paul's perspective about his situation and prayer for the Philippian saints?
5. If someone were to ask you, "What is your identity in Jesus Christ?", what would you tell them? What is the significance, importance or meaning of knowing this? (See "In The Word" below) What are other scriptures that come to mind or that are important to you?
6. What did you find most challenging, helpful, or inspiring in the sermon today, and what will you do differently as a result? What did the Holy Spirit impress upon you?

IN THE WORD: The following are several scriptures from "Follower of Jesus Identification Card"

Genesis 1:27 I am made by God.

John 1:12 I am a child of God.

1 John 4:10 I am loved by God.

2 Corinthians 5:17 I am a new creation.

1 Peter 1:3-5 I am secure in my future.

Ephesians 1:6 I am accepted.

Galatians 5:1 I am free in Christ.

Colossians 2:13 I am forgiven.

PRACTICE:

1. What's your "even if?" What's the uncertainty you're facing right now? What's the question that keeps you up at night? Review what Paul said to the Philippians and live like Paul lived.
2. What is one specific way you can incorporate Paul's prayer points (abounding love, knowledge, discernment) into your prayers for yourself and others this week?
3. How can you choose joy this week, even if you are facing uncertainty?