May 6, 2018 Partnership in the Gospel Philippians 1:1- 18a (Luke 9:46-48) Liturgical color: White

Luke 9: 46 An argument arose among them as to which one of them was the greatest.

 47 But Jesus, aware of their inner thoughts, took a little child and put it by his side,

 48 and said to them, "Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me; for the least among all of you is the greatest."

PRAYER OF THE DAY Holy Lord, May our love overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help us determine what is best, so that we may be pure and blameless in the sight of Jesus Christ. Amen.

HYMNS Alleluia! Sing to Jesus ELW 392, H82 460, 461, NCH 257 Give me Jesus ELW 770/trad. Lord, be glorified ELW 744 CHORAL Pilgrim’s Hymn, Stephen Paulus

**Announcements**

**Prayers**

Comfort in grief for Norma Zimmerman whose husband Dale died this week (funeral at Mohrsville Church of the Brethren, where he was a pastor - on Tuesday v 10a service 11am)

Hospital: Cheryl M (doing well); Ed P (not doing great); Guilia V (doing well); Larry H??; Terry F (many tests)

Preparation for Baptism: Jackson K (next week) and Confirmation (2 weeks) Gavin, Savannah, Enzo, Lacey? Sarina?

Children’s message give away something to keep… childlike (bubbles?)

Art Linkletter’s House Party (radio then TV) used to have a segment called “Kids say the Darnedest Things”:

Children simply blurt-out the truth[[1]](#footnote-1):

Parent: Hurry up we’re going to be late!

11 yo: then you should have started yelling at us sooner!

4yo: What did I earn for being good today?

Parent: My love and affection.

4yo [cries] I don’t want that!

And when children do not know the truth; they take their best guess:

7 yo: Mom, what is a humanitarian?

6 yo: I got this Ma. {A humanitarian is] like a vegetarian, but they eat humans.

And Jesus said: “Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.” That is what a humanitarian really does… welcomes people as if they were made in the image of God… because we are… we are all made in the image of God. This is what unifies us as human beings. We have the ability to have empathy, and compassion. We have the capacity for humor, love and affection (even if that’s not always the love and affection that a 4yo desires!

Jesus taught us this humanitarian way of living; including these easy-to-remember verses about children. But within about 30 years of the events of Easter; Paul needs to **re-teach** followers of Jesus these simple truths.

* Love and affection is for all people. When they do good… and even at other times when it is harder to love
* I’ve got this Ma! There are many times when it is our turn to step-up and take leadership; even if we might be a little off base, or out of our league
* Be like a child, welcome others … all others… in my name!

By participating in these truths all share in the confirmation of the gospel. Both ConfOrming to the gospel and ConfIrming the truth that lies in the good news of Jesus Christ. That is that we are all made children of God; and the least among all is the greatest. So the guy in prison (Paul) is not greater than the guy, Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25), who nearly died from an illness contracted while he was caring for Paul, and neither of these men are greater than Lydia and Pryscilla, the women leading the prayer groups of Christians down by the river, or at their homes. (Acts 16:14, Acts 18)

Their actions, their welcome, their witness that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to live among humans on Earth, to teach, to serve, to shepherd, and ultimately to sacrifice, to die and to rise again… for all people. Like a child welcomes, and loves, and shares (sometimes.)

Believers are not perfect, witnesses to the gospel are not perfect; but that is part of the witness… asking for forgiveness and receiving forgiveness.

Paul is writing to a community from which he is separated by distance and circumstance… but he still loves them enough to write. Saying both thanks for the positive aspects of this community; and also admonishing them to adjust the aspects of their community that need correction. The good news of Jesus Christ is not perfection of the children of God in earth. The effective witness of a Christian community, as Paul points-out is the continual process of good works while sharing in God’s grace even through very difficult circumstances.

For example, Paul has been persecuted, imprisoned, beaten, and completely changed his status in Roman and Jewish society. Paul has also been part of baptizing, and healing and teachings and encouraging and nurturing communities of faith all around the eastern Mediterranean coast. Paul does NOT do this witness alone. Even though he writes letters and his name is well-known… notice that he writes to ALL the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Phillippi. Not just the bishops (who were overseers, not as we known bishops today)and deacons (helpers in the community)… all the saints are part of the body of Christ in the world, responsible for our daily witness to Jesus Christ and the good news about the divine gift in our midst.

What does this mean for us?

Well, according to Paul… as long as our witness is constant and true… even if our motives are less than perfect, or pure… it is essential to witness to Jesus Christ.

It is essential to take the words of Jesus to heart and welcome children, all children, of all places and all ages, as if each one were Jesus himself.

It is essential to never lose hope, even in dire situations.

And all communities and all these children of God benefit from constant prayer… Christian communities pray for one another as Paul says in verse 4 and the community holds him in their heart in verse 7. So my brothers and sisters… as we prepare to go our separate ways, even as we continue to witness to the good news of Jesus Christ… let us pray for one another…

Welcome

Witness

Wonder as children, as humanitarians, full of love and affection.

Christians say the darndest things! And we do not want to wait on this witness until it is too late to start.

Amen.

Sermon~~: 2~~~~nd~~ ~~week follow-up from leadership workshop~~ & begin ‘without me’ language

May 6 sermon notes Philippians 1:1- 18a

Paul in prison again… they need to resolve this conflict without him in their midst; they need to go back to the basics of what Jesus introduced into their midst!

Paul writes to whole church! Not just elders or bishop

Working preacher commentary: “But he doesn’t. Paul writes “to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi” (verse 1). And this matters! Especially as we walk toward Pentecost. He and Timothy are in jail, a condition of vulnerability in the ancient that relies on friends outside for basic needs like food and blankets. He and his partner Timothy reach out to more partners beyond the prison walls. Paul’s whole ministry is one of partnerships, sometimes with fellow missionaries (for example Barnabas, Timothy, Silas) traveling alongside him, and sometimes empowering local leaders such as Lydia or Priscilla. So, while Paul seems like a pretty big personality, **he was not a lone ranger**. Paul’s letter is clear that the whole community of brothers and sisters in Christ share “in the defense ~~and confirmation~~ of the gospel” (verse 16).” - Amy Oden

~~Discuss confOrmation vs confIrmation!~~

Look-up Gk vocab for rejoice in Phil 1:18 is it different than boast of Rom 5:2? From bible study? yes

**Phil 1:18 <5463> cai,rw** *chairo*

**Meaning:** *to rejoice, be glad*

Compared to Romans 5:3

**<2744> kauca,omai** *kauchaomai*

**Meaning:** to boast

1. [https://www.boredpanda.com/funny-s\*\*\*-my-kid-says-tweets/](https://www.boredpanda.com/funny-s%2A%2A%2A-my-kid-says-tweets/) (citation censored) May 4, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)