

Sermon Reflections

Caring While We Are Apart (Philippians 1:1-11)

Summary: Even as we are forced to be apart, we must care for one another as a local church. Paul provides four directives as to how we can care, even when we cannot gather.

1. Zero In On the Local Church (vv. 1-2)

- Amidst the isolation caused by the current pandemic, it can be easy to feel that our situation is unique and unprecedented. Yet we learn in Scripture that Paul was often imprisoned and isolated while maintaining his dedication to faithful ministry. What are some ways we can maintain a caring dedication to minister to the body while we're apart?
- In order to reach the church in Philippi while imprisoned, Paul needed to write a letter and send a messenger. What are some ways we can utilize modern technology to foster even better communication for the benefit of the gospel and fellowship?

2. Thank God for the Local Church (vv. 3-6)

- We learn in Philippians that Paul is continually thanking God for the church in Philippi. What are some ways that you can more frequently thank God in your remembrance of the body? What are some ways you can *remember* the body more?
- What kind of encouragement do we have from the body's fellowship in gospel work and in our future hope? What are some ways we can partner in the gospel while being physically separated?

3. Love the Local Church, Like Christ (vv. 7-8)

- What are some ways you can love your local church with your money/resources?
- Paul says that he yearns for the body in Philippi. Does being physically apart make you yearn for the body more? What are some ways you can better yearn for the body, especially when we cannot physically meet? How can you turn this yearning into prayer? How can we ensure that once we are reunited in fellowship that we continue to yearn for the body?

4. Pray for Spiritual Growth of the Church (vv. 9-11)

- What does it mean for one's love to "abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment"? How can we ensure that our love abounds, despite physical separation?
- What are some ways we can encourage each other to be *more* filled with the fruit of righteousness of Christ?