

A Church That Did Something Right

The Philippi church was established by Paul and Silas (Acts 16). Lydia and her household were part of the number converted :13-15. Paul removed a spirit of divination from a slave girl. Paul and Silas were thrown into prison; the jailer and his household were converted.

This letter lacks the rebuke found in letters to these churches:

Galatians: where there was a prevalence of error in the churches

Corinthians: where there were divisions, strife, immorality, human philosophies

Ephesians: where more problems existed

The Philippian church was doing something right. Let's examine the letter to find out what it was that made them *a church that did something right*.

PROPERLY ORGANIZED. 1:1

Problems are fewer when there are qualified, active overseers.

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.
Act.20:28-31

The flock (congregation) is protected from false teachers.

[Overseer(s) holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he [they] may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. Tit.1:9

Leading, feeding and nourishing is easier to accomplish.

Discipline of unruly members is easier to handle.

ABOUNDED IN LOVE 1:9

Without love of brethren, one can't love God.

If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.
1Jo.4:20

Without both the love of God and the love of brethren, there will be no peace.

For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, take care lest you be consumed by one another. Gal.5:14-15

Not "mushy" love, but intelligent love: "agape."

Love with discernment becomes the "tie that binds." 2:1-2

Such a climate is conducive to spiritual growth and activity.

CONCERNED WITH THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL 1:5

Concern must go beyond “own” immediate concerns. 2:3-4

This can apply to personal and congregational needs.

They had helped Paul on several occasions. 4:10, 14-16

They supplied moral support to others. 1:26

Even while others were envious and full of strife. 1:15-17

FILLED WITH THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS 1:11

The “fruit” Christians are to be filled with are as follows:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Gal.5:22-23

They had such “fruit” because they applied what they believed.

They put the teachings of James 1:25, 2:12 into practice.

They didn't leave undone the “weightier matters: justice, mercy, and faithfulness.”

Mat.23:23

ALWAYS OBEYED 2:12

Consistent obedience by members is a must.

Spasmodic obedience does not build a strong church.

Obedience is to continue even when others are not around providing support, or when others do not always obey.

Obedience is what keeps faith “alive and well.” Cf. Jam.2:24-26

FOREWARNED BY PAUL'S REPEATED ADMONITIONS 3:1,18

They were reminded of important teachings; dangers from without and within; etc.

A church that receives constant reminders will be a strong church.

Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you may be able to call these things to mind. 2Pe.1:12-15

It's not that members try to forget, but they are helped by reminders.

IT IS EASY TO SEE WHY THIS CHURCH WAS IN A GOOD CONDITION

A close look at any congregation will provide the clues to that congregations present condition: whether it is good or poor.

A congregation in good condition will resemble church in Philippi.

May each one of us strive to have this church resemble Philippi.