

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE The Perfection of Partnership

SERIES

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KEY SCRIPTURE Philippians 1:1-11

SYNOPSIS We are partners in the Gospel and as we work together, God is working in us to be completely Christlike.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ The Perfection of Partnership

Philippians 1:1-11

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: 2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. 7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. 8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God.

1. Servants and Saints

☞ This really defines all believers. **We are servants and saints.** Servants of the Lord Christ Jesus. He is our Master and we devote ourselves to him above all others. This is a willing servanthood.

☞ He doesn't force us to serve; **we choose to serve** and we are only following the example of the Master. In John 13 he set the example by washing his disciples' feet, which was the lowliest servant's job.

☞ We are also Saints; holy ones. **We are set apart for the Lord.** We are not just common, ordinary people; we are God's chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, belonging to God. Remember who you are! You are one of God's kids with the privilege of serving the Lord!

2. ☞ Grace and Peace

This is what I want for all of you; good will and **the favor of God** on your life. I also want you to experience the peace of God which transcends all understanding. His peace goes beyond just ☞ having an uneventful life; it's a **serenity in spite of circumstances.** This partly goes back to remembering who you are. No matter what this life throws at you, you can have peace because you know you're a child of God with an outstanding future ahead of you. True tranquility and sincere safety are found in the Lord. Real grace and peace come from God.

3. Thankful for you

I am thankful for all of you and hopefully you are thankful for each other. This Christian walk is ☞ not meant to be traveled alone; we need each other. This **gratitude** for each other is something that should be **expressed** from time to time. **Don't take each other for granted.** So, I say, thank you for being part of OBC; thank you for being part of my life.

In verses 7 and 8 Paul talks about his affection in Christ for the Philippian believers. There's an old chorus that says, *"I love you with the love of the Lord; Yes, I love you with the love of the Lord; I can see in you the glory of my King and I love you with the love of the Lord."* There's



something about being believers that makes us appreciate each other. In other circles, we may not ever choose to be friends, but in Christ, we are actually like family.

4. Praying for you

☞ We should all **talk to God about each other**, but not in a gripey way. We should seek the Lord and ask him for blessings on each other. In verses 9 through 11, Paul elaborates on his ☞ prayer for their **spiritual growth**. He starts with love and builds from there with knowledge, purity and righteousness.

☞ He prays for their **love to abound**. This was Jesus' desire for his followers as well; that we would be loving toward everyone. In fact, our love for each other is a testimony to the world. It should stand out as an identifying characteristic. (John 13:34-35)

☞ But, he doesn't want us to only be loving, which can make us gullible. We should also **grow in knowledge and insight**.

Hosea 4:6

my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge.

1 Corinthians 14:20

Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults.

Colossians 3:10

put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

☞ Knowledge and insight will help us be discerning. Boy, do we ever need **discernment** in these last days! Jesus warned that in the Last Days deception would be a great threat even to believers. We need discernment and it begins with us praying for each other and loving each other. Then we grow in knowledge and insight, leading to discernment.

☞ Ultimately, we want to be **pure, blameless and** filled with **righteousness**, which comes through Christ. As we approach the return of our Lord Jesus, this is all the more important that we be unstained by worldliness and that we be growing more and more in righteousness. This is my prayer for you and should be our prayer for each other.

In the church as a whole, there has been a lot of compromise with the world. Many churches and individual believers have followed the way of Samson; gifted with great calling and capacity, but given over to compromise and collapse. Let's not be among those who walk away from the faith. Let's stand upon the Word of God, proclaiming truth and living righteous lives all the way to the return of Christ!

5. Partners in the Gospel

This is what we are at OBC; we are partners in God's work. The Greek word here is koinonia, ☞ which includes fellowship, joint participation and intimacy. **We are in this thing together!**



Ecclesiastes 4:12

Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

The Bible uses a variety of analogies to help us understand what the church is. We are the body of Christ: though there are many parts, the body works together in unity, supporting each other as we move about to accomplish God's will on earth. We are the family of God: there are different roles within a family, but we are a unit, sharing a bond through the blood of Christ. As they say, "blood is thicker than water." We are also citizens together in the Kingdom of God.

We have koinonia! We are partners in this work of God on earth, specifically in Boone and the surrounding area. Another saying is, "teamwork makes the dream work." We are in this thing together!

☞ I love it when occasionally someone here says to me, **"OBC is our home; this is our family."** That's the way we should view each other. The old chorus says, *"I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God; I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood! Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, for I'm part of the family, the Family of God."*

6. God finishes what he starts

☞ He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion. **God is not giving up on you.** He doesn't just go half way with you through this journey. He is before you, behind, and with you all the way. You may stumble and you may fall, but he is always there to pick you up if you'll just reach out and take his hand.

Lyrics from Clean, by Petra

I've missed the mark I can't deny it; I don't condone or justify it; But I've done nothing that His blood can't wash away; When I take it to the cross and start to pray.

God finishes what he starts. Here's the perfection that comes out of this partnership we have in ☞ Christ. He doesn't leave us unfinished; he keeps working on us and in us **to bring us to complete Christlikeness.** And, all of this is for the glory and praise of God. (verse 11).

☞ **When we are being servants and saints, walking in grace and peace; when we are thankful for each other and praying for each other; growing in the faith, and partnering in the Gospel all while loving each other, then God is glorified.**

Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel here at OBC. We appreciate you and as we close today we are going take a few minutes to express our thanks for your part with our Candy Bar Sunday!