“For from you sounded out the word of God…” I Thessalonians 1:8a

SERMONS FROM GRACE MBC 40TH ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERENCE

THE FITLY FRAMED

I. Introduction
A. Ephesians 1:15-23
B. The power of God is apparent

II. Our State in Time Past
A. Ephesians 2:1-3
   1. We were God’s active enemies
   2. Children who deserved punishment
B. vv. 4-5
   1. Revived
   2. Saved by grace

III. Current State
A. vv. 6-7
   1. Blessed by God – raised up and honored
   2. Brought from shame to honor
B. vv. 8-10
   1. Saved by Grace
   2. Saved for Works, not by works
   3. Pre-ordained by God
C. vv. 11-12
   1. Special place in honor
   2. Circumcised on the heart
D. vv. 13
   1. Brought close by blood
   2. You cannot have a one without a two.
E. vv. 14-16
   1. Conflict of Universe fought in Christ’s body.
   2. By war in his flesh, peace was created

F. vv. 17-18
   1. Activity sought by God
   2. Access through Christ to the rest of the Godhead

G. vv. 19
   1. Again, enemies of God
   2. Redeemed anyway

H. vv. 20
   1. An honorable foundation
   2. The special, holy foundation of Christ & Apostles
I. vv. 21 – 22
   1. We all serve a purpose in the body
   2. Honorable spot as the dwelling of a Holy God

IV. Transformation
A. From God’s enemy to his friend
B. Raised up to serve as part of his temple

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LOVE THAT STICKS

I. Introduction
A. Ephesians 3:14-19
B. Paul – Bow his knee
C. Rooted and grounded in love
D. A tender love of Christ
Let us consider the message in this Psalm and see how these truths could improve our worship experience.

We cannot be sure of the exact circumstances that prompted this song of praise, but there are some truths that are worth noticing.

I. THE MALICE OF MEN

A. The people of Israel have had many enemies.

B. They have been the target of the enemies of the Lord since the beginning of the nation.

C. If we are the witness we are supposed to be, there will be those that will treat us as enemies.

D. These enemies are a real danger and are bent on destroying God's people.

E. Satan is our ever present, relentless enemy.

II. THE GOODNESS OF GOD

A. The Psalmist praises the fact that the Lord was on their side.

B. If He had not been, they would have been destroyed.

C. The enemies of God's people will never defeat us.

D. He has delivered us from the snare of the Devil.

E. How many dangers have we been spared from by the Lord?

III. OUR CERTAIN HELP

A. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

B. Since he made heaven and earth, all is under His control.

BE THANKFUL THE LORD IS ON OUR SIDE

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The Positive Influence Of An Optimistic Believer

Message Text: Philippians 1:12-14

A. Background:

1. The church at Philippi was established under circumstances of adversity.
   a. Paul and Silas beaten and cast into the inner prison. [Their testimony – they prayed and sang hymns to the Lord]
   b. Miraculously liberated – i.e. earthquake.
   c. Salvation of the jailer and family
2. During His stay in Philippi a special love and kindred spirit developed between Paul and the church. [Philippians 1:3-5]
3. After Paul’s departure from Philippi a number of years transpired before the church learned of his imprisonment in Rome.
   a. The church at Philippi dispatched Epaphroditus to minister to Paul and to express their concern for him and his situation.
   b. Evidently, through Epaphroditus the church expressed their regrets that the apostle’s ministry had been hindered by his imprisonment.

For this reason the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to pen the words found in the message text. [Read verses 12-14]

B. Introduction:

1. Paul was an incredibly optimistic believer. It might have been expected to find him brooding over his circumstances, but this was not the case.

2. Definition of an, “optimist”, - “A person who looks on the bright side of things.”
   a. An optimistic person is not unrealistic about circumstances, but in spite of adversity they have learned to view it with an, “eventually it will turn out for the best”, attitude. [Romans 8:28]
   b. As can be seen in the message text this was Paul’s attitude.

3. In view of Paul’s example of an optimistic outlook let us consider three important points that we would do well to follow in bearing out a positive influence on both fellow believers and most importantly the lost.

   I. Notice that the optimistic believer seeks to understand God’s will in all circumstances of life to include times of adversity: [Verse 12]

   A. Paul was as human as you and me. No doubt he questioned the predicament he was in. “why is this happening to me?”

      1. Paul’s all consuming passion was to glorify his Savior and to do the work He had called him to do and now an obstacle stands in the way.
      2. Rather than becoming downhearted and discouraged he sought to understand God’s will in the situation.
3. I am sure he prayed and asked God to reveal His will and give him wisdom and guidance.

4. Paul’s conclusion - Verse 12 -
“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;”

B. Application: As Paul we should seek to understand God’s will in all of the circumstances of life that we face.
   1. Philippians 4:11-13; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Romans 8:28.
   2. Knowing these Bible promises to be true we can afford to face every situation in life with an optimistic outlook.

II. Notice that an optimistic stand for Christ during times of adversity produces a convincing testimony: [Verse 13]

   A. It was well known throughout the emperor’s palace and other places why Paul was there. It was because of his, “bonds in Christ Jesus”.
      1. Paul’s testimony for Christ had an impact upon everyone he came in contact with. [i.e. “why are you here” - Paul would say, “Let me begin with my salvation experience on the road to Damascus.”]
      2. Because of his imprisonment the gospel was being into areas it may have not otherwise reached.
         a. Magistrates of the emperor’s court.
         b. Imperial guard – ranks of the Roman army
   B. Application: Only an optimistic stand for Christ and the gospel produces a positive and powerful testimony.

III. Finally, notice that enduring difficult times with an optimistic outlook motivates fellow believers to greater service: [Verse 14]

   A. In spite of the difficult circumstances he encountered, Paul’s optimistic outlook not only created a positive testimony before the lost, but it motivated fellow believers to be more zealous in their service to the Lord.

   B. Application: The old adage, “you’re either a channel or a clog.”, is so true and especially where the influence we have on others is concerned.
      1. We need to be mindful that others are watching us. For example, new believers in the faith and children.
      2. We have the potential to either motivate them to greater service with an optimistic outlook or to discourage and hinder them with a negative attitude.
      3. No matter what the circumstances might be we should draw ever closer to the Lord and serve Him with optimism knowing that our outlook affects others around us.
Conclusion:

Just now as you stand in the presence of the Lord what can you say about the influence your outlook is having on those around you.

If you are lost, you have nothing to be optimistic about. Only the eternal torments of hell await those who reject Christ and His gift of eternal life.

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LIFTING UP CHRIST
John 3:12-18 tx 14

Intro: The question always is for the preacher: “What to preach that would exalt Christ and encourage the church both.

1. God moves in our Spirit in mysterious ways.
   a. A couple of weeks ago at a funeral of Church member husband a young lady sung a song.
   b. As I sat hearing the song I felt that the subject of a new message should be "Lifting up Christ".

2. In our text Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus about the New Birth.
   a. Nicodemus had come to Jesus by night for a private session.
   b. As we read through the third chapter we find that Nicodemus was told:
      1) How man was first born; the water birth.
      2) Then the necessity of being born again; the Spiritual birth.

3. Then very carefully in words that Nicodemus could understand He told Him of the Cross. Tx. 14

4. Since Nicodemus held a master’s degree in Jewish law, the Old Testament, he knew what Jesus was talking about.

5. In Numbers 21 there is a Fiery trial that Israel passed through.
   a. Because of their murmuring and sin God allowed Snakes to attack the people.
   b. When Moses interceded for them God told Moses to make a brass serpent (snake) and put it on a pole and hold it up where the people could see it.
   c. When the people looked upon the brass serpent, and had faith that it would heal, they were healed of the snake bite.
   d. The Snake (serpent) represented Jesus who became sin for us as He died on the cross.
   e. Nicodemus understood that it was faith in what God did that healed the nation.
   f. And that faith in the Lord who would be crucified that would take away His sin.

6. Since the subject is lifting up Christ I want to examine it in three ways, music, ministry, and message

I. LIFTING UP CHRIST IN MUSIC

1 Chron 13:8 And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. KJV

   A. This Church is very fortunate to have good singers.
   B. Music has been used in worship from the very first.
   C. Good sound, Christian music will lift up Christ and encourage all of the people.
   D. When King Saul had an attack of depression they treated him with music.

1 Sam 16:16 16 Let our Lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a
man, who is a cunning player on harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall ploy with his hand, and thou shalt be well. KJV

1. Science agrees that music will calm the soul.
2. Some of the contemporary music is designed with psychology in mind.
3. The charlatans use certain kinds of music to prepare the people for the false message that they preach.
4. So be careful with your music.
5. Remember this: Satan was created as a musical instrument.

Ezek28:13 Thou host been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. KJV

G. Everything that Satan has and does is done to trick you into drawing away from Christ.

II. LIFTING UP CHRIST IN MINISTRY

Matt 20:26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; KJV

A. The word minister is interesting because we fail to follow through as we should
B. Minister: the word comes from a root form that means to: be an attendant, to run errands, to serve in religious function.
C. If we're to lift up Christ in the ministry we must also be willing to: be an attendant, to run errands, and to serve in a religious manner.
D. In the modern sense we think of he who preaches and leads the church as the minister.
E. In a broader sense the Ministry is that part of the church that serves.
F. The Lord Jesus gave the church orders on how to serve.
1. First and foremost, the church, you, are to make disciples.
   a. A disciple is one who follows the teaching of another.
   b. The object is to gain the confidence in others so that the church can teach them.
2. The process of disciple making requires that the disciple be saved.
   a. So then the church must be evangelistic.
   b. Telling the Gospel in such a way that others might be saved.
3. Second the church is administering baptism.
   a. The command to baptize was given to the church.
   b. It is the church who has such authority.
   c. To be dipped, or plunged beneath water as a burial.
   d. Immersed into the leadership of Christ Jesus.
4. Last, and equal in importance to the other two, is to teach the all things of Jesus.
   a. Which includes Church authority?
   b. Church discipline.
   c. And security of the believer to name a few.
   G. And before we pass on to the next point you must be reminded that ministry is to be in accomplished in Love.

III. LIFTING UP CHRIST IN MESSAGE

A. Since Nicodemus was a Master in the Jewish Law he knew that he was born wrong.
1. He knew that Adam fell in sin and passed sin to all.
2. So Jesus told him there must be something done about the way he was born.
3. All that was left was to be born all over again.

B. The Lord continued to reach out to Nicodemus with the story of the serpent.
1. Nicodemus understood that it was by faith in the action of Moses that cured the snake bite. v.14
2. So the Lord pressed upon him the action of the Cross and it must be taken by faith for the cure of the wrong kind of birth.
3. The sting, the penalty of sin.

C. Follow now the rest of the verses.
vv.13-18
D. When the Son of man is lifted, on the cross., then those who believe in him can have eternal life.

E. The Son of Man, Jesus will, was, lifted and crucified because God so loved the world.
1. God does not want any to perish.
2. But perish we will if we fail to trust in Jesus, fail to believe that He can and will save us from the penalty of sin.

F. Then to really seal the deal the Lord said,

John 3:17-18 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned a/ready, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. KJV

G. And that is the message that will lift up Christ before others.
1. We, through the delivery of the message, will bring glory and honor to the Lord Jesus.
2. Because he deserves to be lifted up in honor and glory.

Eph 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout a/l ages, world without end. Amen. KJV

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How Can We Serve
Isaiah 20:1-6

How far will you go to serve?
What will you do to serve?

I. The Call to Isaiah
A. Spake the Lord
B. Go, Do Something
C. Loose, the sackcloth,
D. Put off even your shoes

II. Obedience of Isaiah
A. And he did so
B. Walking naked and barefoot
C. Three years

III. The Mission
A. For a sign and a wonder
B. upon Egypt, and upon Ethiopia
C. Ethiopian captives
D. Egyptians prisoners and

IV. The Result
A. Lead away
B. Young and old
C. Buttocks uncovered

V. The Shame of Egypt
A. Their greatness was gone
B. All seen what happened
C. What will we do
D. Philippians 1:20

John 12:26
If any man serve me, let him follow me: and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

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GODS MERCIFUL LOVE AND CARE

We've all traveled the mountain tops,
With God's blessings all around,
But when we are in the valley below,
Sometimes we don't understand,

But there is one thing that we know
God is always with us there,
He will carry us through the valley,
With his merciful grace and care

Putting his loving arms around us,
His presence we'll surely feel.
Just putting our trust in Him,
And submitting totally to his will.

Dovie Brown
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Grace Missionary Baptist Church

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