

Tasty – Philippians 1:3-14

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Read John 15:1-8 / Pray

B. A Riptionary of Surf Lingo

1. Surfers have developed a huge vocabulary of unique words.
2. They even have their own word for dictionary – It's a **riptionary**.
3. A **Barney** is an unskilled surfer.
4. **Freddie** is a *reckless* Barney; sometimes called a **Federico** or if a woman, a **Federica**.
5. **Brah** or **Broh** is surf-talk for any fellow surfer.
 - a. **Brosef** is a *close* surf-buddy, or someone you have a lot of respect for.
 - b. But if you overuse the term 'broh' you become a **Brodad**; not good.
6. **Bubbles** refers to a ditzzy beach bunny. "Yo brah, that beach bunny was so bubbles!"
7. If something is **filthy**, it's super good. But if it's **narbs** – it horrendous.
"The break at the Point was filthy this morning, but the Barney's were narbs."
8. There are hundreds of these but there's **one** I want to highlight & apply to our text.
 - a. It goes back a few years. To a surfer, if something is **tasty**, it's *excellent, super-good*.
 - b. Tasty doesn't apply just to food, it's **anything** that causes a glorious stoke!
9. Paul tells us how we can be **tasty peeps!**

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 3-6

1. After his greeting in vs. 1-2 he writes -

³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

2. Paul isn't just being polite. There was a tight bond between Paul & the Philippians.

3. Though they were separated by 800 miles their relationship was close.

4. There'd been regular letters between Paul & the Philippians.

a. Elders from Philippi had visited Paul

b. He'd sent his assistant Timothy there more than once.

5. Now that Paul was under arrest in Rome & awaiting trial, his thoughts turned to them often.

a. Whenever they did, he was moved to thank God for them.

b. That wasn't Paul's first thought when he remembered some of the **other** churches, like Galatia or the Corinthians.

1) Those were **troubled** congregations –

2) Struggling with things that ought not have been a problem.

c. Those churches **stressed** Paul – but not the church at Philippi.

d. They brought a smile to his face & a prayer of thanks to his lips.

³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy,

6. Read all Paul's letters & you see he spent a lot of time in prayer.

7. He never failed to mention the Philippians, asking God to continue blessing them & working in their lives.

8. Praying for them was a **source of joy** to Paul.

a. Though he was under arrest & chained to a guard, his joy was undimmed.

b. He'd had plenty of time to work it out.

1) From the time of his arrest in Jerusalem,

2) The months in prison in Caesarea,

3) The weeks of sailing to Rome, & the months of awaiting trial had given him plenty of time to think about what was going on.

4) He realized since his one desire was to serve God & preach the Gospel, God must have him right where He wanted him.

5) It wasn't what **Paul** would have chosen, but he had come to see that God's ways are better.

9. That lesson that had been driven home powerfully when Paul was in Philippi 10 years before!

a. When he first arrived in the city since there was no Jewish synagogue, Paul had had to preach the Gospel in the streets.

- b. One day a demon-possessed slave girl began following him around, causing a distraction.
 - c. So Paul cast the demon out of her and led her to faith in Christ.
 - d. Her owner was furious because she'd made him a lot of money as a fortune teller.
 - e. He had Paul arrested as a trouble-maker, beaten & thrown into prison.
 - f. Paul & his friend Silas shared the Gospel with their fellow prisoners, then sang their hearts out in worship.
 - g. An earthquake shook the prison & all the cell-doors flew open.
 - h. The jailor came running out of his office, saw the doors hanging wide & assumed the prisoners had run off.
 - i. This was a serious breach of his duty as jailor. He knew he'd be tortured then executed the next day, so he drew his sword to kill himself.
 - j. But Paul & Silas had persuaded the other prisoners the right thing to do was stay put; they were all still there.
 - k. They saw the jailor getting ready to fall on his sword & called out to him to stop; they were all still there.
 - l. The Jailor couldn't believe they'd not run off.
 - m. That became the opening Paul needed to share the Gospel with him. The jailor & his entire family came to faith in Christ & became some of the first members of the church.
10. That jailor & his family were some of the faces Paul thought of when he remembered the Philippians.
- a. Had he not been falsely arrested, beaten & tossed in jail, that man & his family might never have heard.
 - b. So looking back, Paul could see clearly how faithful God is & how His ways are so much better than ours.
11. And that filled him with joy. His hardships had made him **better, not bitter**.
12. You & I have the same choice when hardship comes our way.
- a. It will either make us better, or bitter.
 - b. We can trust God knows what's He's doing or assume we know more.
13. We can be sure Paul didn't **enjoy** imprisonment. But he trusted God was **using** it to grant his deeper desire to win the lost to Jesus.
14. A bit later we'll see THAT was exactly the case!
15. Another source of Paul's joy is found in v. 5 -
- ⁵ for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,
16. Throughout the 10 years he'd known them, the Philippians supported Paul.
- a. They prayed for him & sent him financial support.
 - b. As a tent-maker, Paul usually paid his own way & did ministry at his own expense.
 - c. But the Philippians understood if they helped pay some of Paul's bills, he'd have **more time** to do ministry & plant churches.
 - d. Their support was doubly important now that he was in Rome because being under arrest, he couldn't work.
 - e. And prisoners weren't fed & clothed by the jailor; they relied on the charity of their family & friends.
 - f. Without the Philippians help, Paul could have gone hungry.
17. In ch. 4 when Paul returns to this subject he again thanks them & reminds them their support partnered them with him so that **their reward** was the same as his.
18. Paul couldn't have done what he did without help & he knew it.
- a. By praying for him & sending him the practical assistance of financial help,
 - b. They were assisting him in expanding the Kingdom of God.
 - c. God would reward them for that partnership.
19. We get a lot of requests from ministries & missionaries for support.
- a. We can't support all of them.
 - b. The one's we **do** support are people from CCO who go out.
 - c. We also look for ministries that are involved in church-planting or church-building in areas of the world where there isn't a strong Christian presence.
 - d. We look for ministries where the maximum amount goes to **ministry** rather than administration.

- e. Every so often we have a ministry or missionary come & share their calling to reach the world to give you an opportunity to partner **specifically** with them.
 - f. Besides regular giving to your church, it's a good idea to find a ministry or missionary you can get behind and support both with prayer & your giving, even if all you can give is \$5 a month.
 - g. That \$5 could mean an extra hour or two a missionary has to share the love of God with people & during that time, people could be saved.
20. Another reason for Paul's joy, v. 6 . . .
- ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;
21. In v. 5, Paul was joyous because of their partnership with him **from the beginning**. Now he looks **to the future**, confident that they will go on, faithful to the end.
22. Let's read it again.
23. Does Paul sound bummed out & depressed about the Philippians?
24. No way! He's **stoked**! This was a group of people he delighted in.
- a. They were growing in grace & faith.
 - b. The love of God was evident in them.
25. There's a lot of bad-mouthing the church today.
- a. It comes from both inside & outside.
 - b. Many **Christians** have a negative view of the church & see it as messed up.
 - c. No doubt in some places it is; but not everywhere.
 - d. There are some good churches & CCO is one of them. You guys rock!
 - e. Sure some of us struggle. We have some real knuckleheads.
 - f. We **need** the knuckleheads so we can practice the virtues of patience & longsuffering & determined love.
26. Like Paul with the Philippians – I love you guys! You make me smile.
27. And I thank God for you all the time.
28. I have every confidence that just as God brought you to faith in Him, He's going to complete what He's begun.
29. Christian – Listen: God's not done with you yet. There's more work to do in conforming us to the image of Christ.
- a. More chiseling, more scraping; more sanding & polishing.
 - b. God never begins a work then gets bored & walks away.
 - c. He always completes what he starts. He's going to complete you.
30. But know this – that won't be till Jesus comes again.
31. We're in an especially tough season here at Calvary.
- a. There are a lot of people in our church family going through really hard stuff.
 - b. While many are discovering the grace of God in brand new ways, others are struggling.
 - 1) Marriages are in turmoil. There's major problems with kids.
 - 2) Many people are out of work, losing their home, cars.
 - 3) Illness is rampant.
 - c. My prayer list has never been longer!
32. In the midst of the turmoil, God has taught me to look at it from a different perspective than I've done in the past.
- a. I **know** the day will come when we will look back on all this with the clarity of hindsight.
 - b. We'll see how God worked all things together for good.
 - c. We'll rejoice in His faithfulness to turn what looks like a loss into a win.
 - d. By faith, I'm standing in that day **NOW** – when everything is still dark & chaotic.
33. **Knowing** that day **will** come, & standing in it by faith, renews my hope & gives wisdom in what to say & do.
34. That's what Paul was doing. So even though the Philippians were suffering for their faith, he was confident they'd make it safely home because God is faithful.
- B. Vs. 7-11
- ⁷ just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains

and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.

1. This is one of those places where the translation from Greek to English is difficult.

2. A paraphrase is helpful. Paul says,

You Philippians have a special place in my heart because it's obvious the grace of God is at work in all of us the same way. You aren't just fair-weather friends. We're brothers built for adversity. Not only did you support me when I was free to plant churches, you continue to now that I'm under arrest.

⁸ For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.

3. Absence makes the heart grow fonder and Paul's long time away from Philippi had caused a deep longing to see them again.

4. Not able to be with them, he did the *next best* thing; he *prayed* for them.

⁹ And this I pray,

5. He lists 4 things.

1) that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,

a. They were already marked by love. But you can never have too much.

b. So Paul asked God to give them *more* love,

c. Not a *sloppy-agape* unconnected to truth.

d. His prayer was that their love would be wise & well spent.

e. Later Paul warns them about the ever-present danger of false teachers.

1) They would make themselves easy prey for deception if, in the interest of being loving, they accepted everything false teachers presented.

2) We must stay alert to this danger.

3) All too often the church refuses to stand against error because it thinks being loving means accepting everything.

4) No! Real Love goes hand in hand with Truth; you can't have one w/o the other.

2) ¹⁰ that you may approve (distinguish) the things that are excellent,

f. When the Philippians first came to faith in Christ, as Gentiles with no knowledge of God's Word they'd had to learn the difference between *good & bad*.

g. But now that they'd walked with God for ten years, they could discern the difference between what's good & the best, what excels.

h. The spiritually mature know that by waiting on God & seeking His will the Spirit often reveals a course of action better than what at first seemed good.

i. [Lynn & I staying here in Oxnard]

3) that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

j. This word 'sincere' is interesting; literally – "sun-proof"

1) Sculpture was a thriving trade in the Roman Empire.

2) Anyone of means had sculptures decorating their home.

3) It was common for a stray chisel to knock off a piece of stone in the wrong place, ruining an otherwise fine work of art.

4) So unscrupulous sculptors would mix marble dust & wax & fill a hole, or stick a broken nose or ear, back on.

5) The buyer would be none the wiser till the sun came out & heated up the statue standing in their courtyard. Then the nose would side off.

k. For this reason, *quality* sculptors placed their finished work outdoors in the sun to be tested. It was sun-proof; meaning it had no flaws that would ruin it.

l. Being sincere means *refusing to pretend* or be a poser.

1) The sincere person isn't perfect.

2) But he *doesn't hide*, excuse, or justify his faults.

3) He *confesses* them & asks God to heal him.

m. Paul prayed the Philippians would continue to grow in grace & be a people of such moral excellence, there'd be no opening for their enemies to charge them with anything.

4) ¹¹ being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

C. Fruit

1. Fruit! Do you like fruit?
2. Because our diet has so much processed food with added sugar & salt, fruit isn't as important a commodity as it was throughout most of history.
3. In Paul's day, fruit was a delight because it was one of the few sweets they ate.
4. Think about the incredible flavor of fruit!
 - a. Peaches, strawberries, kiwis, bananas,
 - b. Apples, pears, grapes, blueberries, raspberries, cantaloupe, watermelon,
 - c. Figs, lemons, oranges, limes, pineapple, pomegranate
 - d. Mango, grapefruit, passion fruit, plums = Yummmm
5. Besides tasting good, they're good for you!
6. When the Bible speaks of spiritual fruit, it means something good that brings delight.
7. It adds flavor & richness to life.
8. As we saw in John 15, Jesus wants His followers to bear fruit.
 - a. We produce fruit by **abiding** in Him.
 - b. Fruit is the natural result of staying in fellowship with Jesus.
 - c. Just as oranges grow on a branch connected to the trunk.
9. Paul says the same thing here – look:
being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ,
 - a. The fruit comes by the Spirit of Christ working in & through us.
 - b. And when it comes, look what it does -
to the glory and praise of God.
 - c. Just as Jesus said in John 15:8 –The Father is glorified by our bearing much fruit.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Tasty!

1. I like this! Paul prayed the Philippians would be **tasty**!
 2. He asked God to make them a community of such glorious excellence that it delighted God, each other, & the rest of their city.
 3. But here's the deal – Jesus began His teaching on being fruitful in John 15:2 with this –
Every branch that bear fruits, the Father prunes, that it may bear more fruit.
 4. In vs. 12-18, Paul speaks about some pruning that God had done in his life to make him more fruitful.
We'll look at that next week.
- For today – just dwell on the truth that God wants to fill you with good fruit & make you a delight.