

Lydia's House

*Philippians 1:3-8*

**EXPLORING THE SERMON**

- \* What did you hear?
- \* What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- \* What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

**KEY VERSES**

*<sup>3</sup>I thank my God for every remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup>always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy <sup>5</sup>for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God's grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup>For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the tender affection of Christ Jesus.*

**REFLECTION**

In this three-week series, *Unlocking Joy*, we look at the opening verses of Paul's letter to the Philippians. Last week we were reminded in verses 1-2 that we are all saints, and that forgiveness is the only thing the church offers that can be found nowhere else. This week, Paul's message of joy and gratitude to the church in Philippi carries an underlying urgency, written from prison and while he faced imminent death.

**Recall a conversation or encounter you had that took place out of a place of urgency. How did it impact you? Did it help you be more forthcoming in later communications with others?**

**Consider the history of this church in Philippi. How does each point help us understand Paul's letter to them?**

- 1) Paul, from Tarsus, was told in a vision to go to Macedonia, in modern-day Greece. This would be the gospel's first trip to a new continent, which ultimately landed as this new church in Philippi.
- 2) The first convert in Phillip was Lydia, a woman and dealer in purple cloth. Totally rare for the time.
- 3) Lydia was head of her household, and the church began in her house. Head of household made decisions for the rest of the family, and was rarely a woman.

Paul's words to the Philippians contain no doctrine or rules, but are all about relationships. He wants them to know how important they are; his raw honesty just as captivating now as it was then. One of the best things we can embody is to support a network of relationships like this. **In what areas of your life are you being called to bolster connections? Where do you need to trade checklists and goals for relationships?**