

# **Philippians – Above the Circumstances!**

## ***Spiritual Friendship – 1:7-11***

- Vs. 7-8  
The basis of spiritual friendship
- Vs. 9-11  
Prayer for spiritual friends

# **Above the Circumstances!**

## **Phil 1:7-11 *Spiritual Friendship***

### **Verses 7-8 The Basis of Spiritual Friendship: *the fellowship of grace***

- A right and firm conviction
  - Eph 3:20; Phil 2:13, Phil 1:6
  - The ‘perseverance of the saints’ (i.e. He perseveres with us!)

# **Above the Circumstances!**

## **Phil 1:7-11 *Spiritual Friendship***

### **Verses 7-8 The Basis of Spiritual Friendship: *the fellowship of grace***

- A right and firm conviction
- Warmth and tenderness of relationship
  - Heart = ‘the real me inside’  
Soul-mates, kindred spirits
  - Long for – delight in
  - The affection (*‘bowels’*) of Jesus Christ  
Viscera = the seat of the emotions!  
*‘I love you with the love of the Lord’*

# **Above the Circumstances!**

## **Phil 1:7-11 *Spiritual Friendship***

### **Verses 7-8 The Basis of Spiritual Friendship: *the fellowship of grace***

- A right and firm conviction
- Warmth and tenderness of relationship
- The 'Fellowship of the Grace'
  - Literally: 'fellow partakers of the grace'
  - This is what we have in common – this is what distinguishes true spiritual friendships from other kinds of relationships
  - The church, the family of God, is to be the *Fellowship of the Grace*

# **Above the Circumstances!**

## **Phil 1:7-11 *Spiritual Friendship***

### **Verses 9-11 Prayer for Spiritual Friends**

- What Paul doesn't pray for
- Ever abounding love
  - *Agape* love (Gal 2:20; I Cor 13)
  - Love overflowing its banks – like a stream in the spring (Rom 5:4)

# **Above the Circumstances!**

## **Phil 1:7-11 *Spiritual Friendship***

### **Verses 9-11 Prayer for Spiritual Friends**

- What Paul doesn't pray for
- Ever abounding love
- Spiritual discernment
  - Love must not degenerate into 'sentimental gush'
  - So that you can distinguish between things that are different  
i.e. testing the purity and actual weight of coins
  - Wisely discerning the way things really are

# Above the Circumstances!

## Phil 1:7-11 *Spiritual Friendship*

### Verses 9-11 Prayer for Spiritual Friends

- What Paul doesn't pray for
- Ever abounding love
- Spiritual discernment
- Practical godliness
  - 'pure and blameless,' 'sincere and without offense'  
i.e. an exemplary life!
  - Sincere:  
Latin = *sine cera* = 'without wax'  
Greek = 'sun-tested'

*Spiritual friends pray for each other that their lives may be 'without wax' and able to withstand the scrutiny of the sun*

# **Above the Circumstances!**

## **Phil 1:7-11 *Spiritual Friendship***

### **Questions for reflection and application**

- What 'defines' you?
  - Personal circumstances?
  - Personal traits?
  - Or that you're part of 'The Fellowship of the Grace'?
- What are you really doing to cultivate true spiritual friendships?
- Do you pray for the right things?  
(for both yourself and for other people)

***Spiritual friendships are foundational for  
'Life Above the Circumstances'!***

