

# “I Love You More.”

## Philippians 1-4

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / September 13, 2020

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### I. You need to know something pure & simple, without any strings attached. I'm proud of you, I love you, and I really do think you're the best.

**Philippians 1:3-5** “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”

**A.** I want you to know that every time I remember you, every time I think of you, every time I pray for you, I do so with so much joy in my heart. As a pastor, I am envious of absolutely nobody, and am grateful that we get to participate in the Christian life and Gospel ministry together.

**Philippians 1:6** “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

**B.** Paul told the Philippians he was confident that the good work the Lord began in the church at Philippi would be brought to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. He was confident in the work of God being completed by God. It's all about God.

However, as you read through the rest of the book, you see his confidence in God's work in them is further strengthened by the evidence of God working in them and through them. As a fellow Christian, but especially as your Pastor, that's a joy to see and I count it no small privilege to be among you.

You are the best...and I love being your pastor.

### II. You need to remember our calling to shine brightly as lights in this increasingly dark world!

**Philippians 2:12-18** “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. **Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world**, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.”

**Grumbling** is a negative emotional response to something unpleasant, inconvenient or disappointing. **Disputing** refers to an intellectual questioning, doubting or bickering over a matter.

While grumbling is emotional & disputing is intellectual, both come forth from a self-centered notion that you deserve better than the circumstances you find yourself in.

The darker our day and age becomes, the brighter Christians shine by being altogether *different* from the crooked and twisted generation in which we live!

### III. **You need to press on towards the single, primary goal for all believers - the upward call of God in Christ Jesus!**

**Philippians 3:12-14** “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me His own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. **But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**”

Paul was striving to forget what “lies behind” - that is, that which he will leave behind in this life, and straining towards what “lies ahead” - that is, that which he would receive because of who he was in Christ.

**Philippians 3:20-21** “**But our citizenship is in heaven**, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.”

**Philippians 3:15** “**Let those of us who are mature think this way**, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.”

### IV. **You need to look for opportunities to share in the trouble that faces the church today!**

**Philippians 4:14-20** “**Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.** And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. **And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.** To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

**Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Community Group discussion:**

- (1) Would you classify yourself as a grumbler or a disputer? Or both? Give an example or two to support your answer.
- (2) Read Philippians 3:13-14. During particularly difficult seasons of life, do you find yourself pressing on & longing more for heaven than other times, or is it harder to do so?
- (3) Read Philippians 4:13-20. How are you helping to bear the uniquely challenging burdens facing our church family these days? What can you do differently in the days to come?