

Philippians 1: Together We Burn Hotter

Dr. John Carmichael

[Phi 1:3-5, 7 NASB95] 3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. ... 7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.

- Coals separated grow cold but grouped together, they ignite into sustained fire. The same is true in the church. There is a corporate fire in Spirit-filled fellowship.
- Paul writes to the Philippians not just as individuals, but as partners in the Gospel. He feels them in his heart because they are partakers of the same grace (v. 7). Fellowship in the Spirit is more than coffee after service. It is an anointed partnership that brings power, provision, and perseverance.
- This idea is very counter-cultural to our individualistic, stay-at home mindset.
- **Brief intro to Philippians:**
 - The book of Philippians was written by the Apostle Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome, around AD 60 - 62. Despite being confined, the letter overflows with joy, thanksgiving, and encouragement making it one of Paul's most personal and warmest epistles.
 - Paul addresses the believers in Philippi, a Roman colony in Macedonia. It was the first church planted in Europe (Acts 16), birthed through powerful ministry moments like the conversion of Lydia, the deliverance of a slave girl, and the miraculous prison break that led to the jailer's salvation.
 - Despite being written from prison, "joy" or "rejoice" appears over a dozen times. It teaches that Spirit-filled joy isn't based on circumstances, it's rooted in Christ.
 - Unlike Galatians or Corinthians, Philippians contains no major correction or rebuke. It's a letter of gratitude, encouragement, and deep affection.
 - Philippians shows the power of church partnership in missions and ministry. The Philippian believers financially supported Paul and were seen as true partners in the Gospel (Phil. 1:5; 4:15 - 18).

What do we need to know about how fellowship helps us burn hotter from Philippians?

Here are three lessons about fellowship we learn from Philippians 1:3-5, 7.

I. Fellowship Releases a Shared Grace

- a. Philippians 1:7 - "You are all partakers with me of grace..."
- b. Paul says the Philippians share in the grace on his life—this means there is a transference, a shared flow of God's anointing among believers.
- c. In Kingdom fellowship, what's on one becomes available to all.
- d. Psalm 133:1–2 - Unity brings the anointing down like oil on Aaron's head. [Psa 133:1-2 NASB95] 1 A Song of Ascents, of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, [Even] Aaron's beard, Coming down upon the edge of his robes.
- e. Romans 1:11–12 - Paul longs to impart a spiritual gift through mutual encouragement. [Rom 1:11-12 NASB95] 11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you [while] among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

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- f. There's a grace on this house—and it's yours to walk in. As you go all in, expect to see God move in your life and family.

II. Fellowship Fuels the Fire of Joy and Strength

- a. Philippians 1:3–4 - "I thank my God... with joy..."
- b. The strength of Paul's joy is rooted in the partnership of believers. Fellowship lifts the spirit and fuels the flame.
- c. Joy is a fruit of Spirit-filled relationships.
- d. Nehemiah 8:10 - The joy of the Lord is our strength. [Neh 8:10 NASB95] 10 Then he said to them, "Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."
- e. Acts 2:42–47 - Early church thrived through Spirit-led fellowship and gladness of heart. [Act 2:42-47 NASB95] 42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they [began] selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.
- f. Sacred joy provides strength for the journey. Develop positive relationships with people. Move out of isolation and into fellowship. Be intentional. Make the call. Attend the meetings. Show up. Engage.

III. Fellowship Advances the Gospel Mission

- a. Philippians 1:5 - "...in view of your participation (i.e. fellowship/partnership) in the gospel from the first day until now."
- b. The Philippians weren't spectators—they were co-laborers in mission, finance, and prayer. Gospel momentum increases in partnership.
- c. When we partner, our anointings don't just add—they multiply.
- d. Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 - Two are better than one... a threefold cord is not quickly broken. [Ecc 4:9-12 NASB95] 9 Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. 10 For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. 11 Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm [alone?] 12 And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three [strands] is not quickly torn apart.
- e. Luke 5:6–7 - The catch was so big, they had to call their partners to help carry the blessing. [Luk 5:6-7 NASB95] 6 When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets [began] to break; 7 so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink.
- f. God's call on ENC is on all of us. Lets lean in. The catch is going to be so big, we will need everyone! Find your place.
- g. There are no areas in this church that are closed. Every leader is instructed to welcome, train, and release you into this ministry.

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- **God wants us to know that the anointing multiplies when believers walk in fellowship; like coals in a fire, we burn hotter together.**
- **Just as Paul held the Philippians in his heart, we are called to hold one another up in Gospel fellowship. The Holy Spirit doesn't just anoint individuals—He anoints the body. The corporate fire of fellowship burns hotter than any solo flame.**