

Roots in the Dark

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BIG IDEA

A movement without structure may start with fire, but a movement with roots keeps bearing fruit.

KEY SCRIPTURES

1 Samuel 16:1-13; Zechariah 4:10; Acts 16; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Philippians 1:1-11,15-18,25; 2:1-5,16-18; 4:1,10-18

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1. Philippians begins with “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus.” What does this opening reveal about partnership, apprenticeship, and the non-solo nature of gospel ministry?
 2. Acts 16 shows the church in Philippi beginning outside the city by a river. Where might you be tempted to despise a small beginning because it feels too hidden, slow, or ordinary?
 3. Lydia’s open heart and the jailer’s conversion show God working in very different people and places. What does that teach us about how gospel movements often begin?
 4. Philippians 1:1 names “overseers and deacons.” Why does it matter that a church born in prayer and suffering eventually became an organized, maturing community?
 5. Where do you instinctively see organization as life-giving, and where do you tend to see it as restrictive?
 6. What is the difference between structure that protects a move of God and structure that stifles it? Where have you seen structures fuel the move of God and where have you seen structures stifle a move of God?
 7. Paul writes with joy while he is in prison. What does Philippians 1:3-8 teach us about the kind of joy that is rooted in gospel partnership rather than personal comfort?
 8. Philippians 1:6 is often read individually, but Paul is addressing the whole church. The verse can apply personally, but How does the communal nature and gospel center of the context change the way we understand God “carrying on to completion” the work He began?
 9. Paul prays that their love would abound “in knowledge and depth of insight” so they can discern what is best. Where do you need love and discernment to grow together right now?
 10. What would it look like for our church to be “Philippi”–holy in Christ, rooted for mission, structured for sending, generous in partnership, and joyful under pressure?