

BELLEFIELD  
PRESBYTERIAN

*God's Most  
Glorified in Us  
When We're Most  
Satisfied in Him*

4001 5th Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Brown  
preaching today  
[B.A. & Ph.D. from Pitt!]

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### For this Week for You:

#### Actions in Response to God's Word

- Take time today to reevaluate your priorities; ask God for grace to delight passionately & deeply in His glory as the ultimate source of your happiness;
- Tell someone this week of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—and go ahead and feel some rejoicing inside whether its met with mockery or salvation; practice Paul's viewpoint as your own, vs.15-18;
- What's been the deepest ache of your soul recently? Bring it to God in prayer and ask for grace to see it as a mere, but real, next to the last syllable of meaning and joy—the last syllable being Jesus Christ & His glory in your salvation & others', too.
- Pray for someone in a "prison"—and encourage them about it, see verse 19.

## 4. The Wind of a Radical *Theocentricity*

To be electrified is significantly different from being electrocuted. The latter usually signifies death; the former bespeaks of passion and energy ongoing in life. I mention this because mere duty isn't going to get it here. If I'm in prison, and my mode of aligning myself to Jesus Christ is that of duty-bound self-sacrifice, then I'm going to be 1 miserable man. But if instead of mere duty to Jesus Christ, my soul has been fashioned and fed on *delight* in Christ's majesty

being seen, in His glory being presented even through my dire circumstances; if my fondest delight in the quest for my happiness in life is found in the exhibition of God's glory in the world, then wherever I am or am not, and whatever I have or have not, only let Jesus Christ's gospel be heard and His Name be praised, & I am happy, *rejoicing*.



Electrified by His glory.

## TODAY'S SERMON HELPS

### Bellefield Presbyterian Church

#### *An Imprisoned Free Radical— How to Fly When Your Wings Are Clipped*

Worship God

10/12/08

Sermon  
Moves @ a  
Glance

- *If we're going to be radical for our joy in God's glory then let blow the winds of*

1. *A Radical Gospel-centricity;*
  2. *A Radical Christocentricity; &*
  3. *A Radical Pneuma-(Spirit) centricity.*
- *These must be our delight not a mere duty.*

**Philippians 1:12-20**  
What a passage! It sets before us beautifully our BPC core biblical value #3: ***To introduce people to Jesus Christ.*** Could Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit be any stronger in his radical *gospel-centricity*? You know we talk about our worldview as anchored in *Theocentricity* or *God-centered-ness*; we speak

of our lives evidencing *Christocentricity* or a *Christ-centeredness*. But this is true only because someone impacted us with their *Gospelcentricity*: they were radically *gospel-centered* enough to spread their own redemptive wings for Jesus and help us to spread ours, too. So what happens when somebody clips them?

#### ***Radix & Philippians' Radical Theme***

Paul's in prison, but that's no matter, for still 14 times his *rejoicing* takes wing. He still flies; his Christian soul finds its root happiness not in life circumstances, but in exalting over the preeminence of Jesus Christ presented in the Gospel in any way. *True rejoicing comes from God's being gloried—that's the root that's radical.*



**Radix is Latin for root....**

## “The Wind Beneath My Wings”



**Bette Midler made the song famous; we take it for its theological impact.**

So you're a student and mid-term pressures are real and painful. You're a mother of baby triplets & all of life looks like one endless diaper change. You are a new pastor, absolutely adrift despite being back in your

home town. Talk about clipped wings! How's anybody suppose to fly like this? Well, you have to be lifted. So what's sufficiently strong enough to be your needed gale force?

### 1. The Wind of a Radical *Gospelcentricity*

*“Can our affections for God's glory be so quickened that all our circumstances are only secondary to our happiness over His glory being seen?”*



**#1: Circumstances may try to clip your wings.**

**Philippians 2:11b-14** And 11b gets us airborne with an amazing zephyr, “to the glory and praise of God”—and then Paul adds, “I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel....” Right! He's talking about being thrown in prison. What about your loss? The death of your dream? The frustration of a lost relationship. What lets you still fly here? **Grace.**

#### 1a. God's Wind Alters Our Pain

**Philippians 1:12-13** What's blowing in Paul's theological mind? The wind of a radical assumption of sovereign Providence over all his circumstances. Wherever he is, the gospel shall be. Its advance is

sacred to him. The centrality of God's glory in the gospel of Jesus Christ is his life's last syllable; all other aspects of life are important, but they are always only the next to the last syllable regarding happiness.

## 2. The Wind of a Radical *Christocentricity*

**Phil. 1:15-18** “Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry... not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.” So what's Paul's answer to the debilitating effect of enemies, of critics, of nasties? He says, “What then? Only that in every

way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, in that I rejoice.” Jesus Christ lifted up breaks the attitudinal chains of our imprisonments. “Just give me Jesus.” If He's talked about, we're happy.



**#2: People may try to stand on your wings, to try to keep you from flying.**

### 3. The Wind of a Radical *Pneumacentricity*

**Philippians 1:19-20** “...for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance...that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.” “Honored in my body” is simply a biblical synonymous phrase for “glorified in my body.” *Pneuma* is simply a Greek word for Spirit. We are never on our own in the negative circumstances.

*“The Holy Spirit's iconography is a dove; He helps us fly high.”*

#### 3a. The Synergy of Divine Wind & Human Agency

**Prayer!** Our lives will be different tomorrow if we don't pray today; our church will be, too. How we react to life's imprisonments will be either tempered by the presence and power of

the Holy Spirit released by sovereign grace through our prayers, or we will limp along without His anointing and power. For Paul, confidence & courage arise because of *their* prayers.



**Powerful human agency linked to the Holy Spirit in letting us fly.**