

“Pressing On: God’s Good Psychology”

Proper 22-A October 5, 2008

Philippians 2:4b-14

Introduction:

In this fascinating lesson from Paul’s letter to the Philippians we hear something of Paul’s personal testimony and some advice that is extremely good psychology.

Paul’s Testimony:

Paul reminds his readers that his road to a relationship with Jesus Christ took him on a long journey. First, He became a Pharisee. Paul was born to a Jewish mother and a Roman father in Tarsus in, what is now, Turkey, and named Saul. He grew-up a citizen of two cultures. He could read and write in both Jewish and Latin. Through his mother he was a citizen of Israel; through his father he was a citizen of Rome.

As a brilliant Jewish student Paul was disciplined to a famous Rabbi in Jerusalem. As one of Rabbi Gamaliel’s students Saul diligently studied all the sacred Jewish scriptures and commentaries and became an expert on the Jewish Law. Because of his brilliant mind and devout religious lifestyle he was chosen to become a Pharisee. Pharisees were one of the ruling religious parties of the day. They were characterized by their religious devotion and purity. They regularly fasted, paid tithes, kept all the rules and regulations laid out in the Old Testament, took their seat