

Second Hand Preacher 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time 10 8 17

Philippians 4:6-9

Have you ever received great advice? You know the kind that really straightens you out and makes things more clear. Often we have to be in the right frame of mind to receive the help. Sometimes we fight it, but if we really need it we listen and hopefully we are changed. The giver of the advice is a factor as well. If their authority is proven, then we can follow more easily.

St. Paul was a great authority, as he was given his power from God. By his conversion he was connected to Jesus and the Lord formed him and guided him. He was a missionary preacher responsible for establishing many Christian communities. These churches spread the faith and they would risk their lives to defend it. Paul suffered much persecution because of his Christian beliefs. This caused him to be in prison and eventually martyred.

One of my favorite letters Paul wrote was this one to the Philippians. The letter is fairly short and sometimes I go and read the whole thing. This letter is one of hope meant to encourage those particular Christians and universally all Christians as well. This particular chapter is great advice. To think of things true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and gracious is an awesome gift. Paul is a great teacher and all Christians are invited to build virtue as a way to welcome the Kingdom.

We all need to build virtue. Thinking of those fantastic things can hopefully lead to action within our community. When we are strong, we can promote virtue to the whole world. Some can do it with words, but most do it with action and personal encounters. We can build the kingdom one soul at a time. Like a skilled mason, we can construct a building from God by all the bricks of people that are in our midst.