Paul s connection to the Philippians is rooted in what they have in common in Christ.

Point #1 – Fellowship marked by a common plea (vs. 3-4)

Point #2 – Fellowship marked by a common commitment (vs 5)
- Common Markers:
  - Sharing the gospel (Mark 8:35)
  - Christian Giving (Philippians 4:10,14–18 and 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:13)
  - Suffering for Christ (Philippians 3:10).
  - Bearing one another s burdens (Galatians 6:2)
  - Calling attention to observed patterns of sin (Galatians 6:1-5)
- 2 Corinthians 6:14
- 1 Thessalonians 2:8

Point #3 – Fellowship marked by a common belief (vs 6)
- Romans 8:29–30
- Ephesians 1:3–14
- Galatians 3:3

Point #4 – Fellowship marked by a common experience (vs 7-8)
- 1 Peter 3:15
- Ephesians 1:3–14
- Galatians 3:3

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"The secret to joy is keeping things in this order: Jesus, Others, Yourself. As you scan through the letter to the Philippians, you see that Paul is all about Jesus, and is mind is filled with concern for others, namely, the Philippian believers. When contemplating the glory of death, he says, I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and you in the faith (1:25). Paul doesn't pretend he has no real needs but the glory of Jesus and the needs of others occupy his heart and mind. He lives out his later exhortation: Consider others as more important than yourselves." — Tony Merida

Questions for Reflection:

1. Where do people look for joy? How is this different from Paul's view of joy?

2. What does fellowship look like to you? How does this compare to Paul's view?

3. Why are gospel partnerships important? Why do you need them?

4. What are some problems associated with trying to live out the Christian life apart from community?

5. What are some of the enemies of enjoying biblical community?

6. Does Philippians 1:6 encourage you? If yes, how so?

7. What are three tangible steps you can take to strengthen your end of the gospel partnership?

Adapted from *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Philippians* by Tony Merida & Francis Chan

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