

The Church at Philippi

Vs.1-11 Partners in Christ's Gospel

- Founded by Paul on his second missionary journey
- The first church to be established by him in Macedonia (northern Greece) during his second missionary journey in 50 -52AD (see Acts 16:12-40)
- Paul visited at least twice more during his third missionary journey in 52-56AD (see Acts 20:1-6).
- Philippi was a small city, founded by King Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great.
- It came under Roman rule in 168 BC after the battle of Philippi in 42BC fought between the forces of Brutus and Cassius and those of Antony and Octavian (later Caesar Augustus).
- It became a Roman "colony," a military outpost city with special privileges.

The Church at Philippi

- Paul's relationship with the church at Philippi was always close and cordial.
- When Paul was in Thessalonica, the church at Philippi helped him financially at least two times (4:16)
- When they heard of his confinement in Rome, the church sent Epaphroditus with another financial gift. (see Philippians 4:18).
- Epaphroditus had become almost fatally ill while with Paul (2:27), but when he recovered, Paul sent him back to Philippi with this letter.
- This letter is a thank-you letter for that gift, and an encouragement to live humble like Jesus rather than selfish and proud, and reminds them that their life in union with Christ is the result of faith rather than by following the Jewish law. This is the most personal letter Paul wrote to a church.

On Paul's second missionary journey, he took Silas with him. They went to Ephesus, spent some time there, and then went to Troas. Their plan was then to go through Bithynia and back to Antioch, but the Holy Spirit changed that plan and called Paul to go to places that the Gospel had never been preached.

Turn to Acts 16, which is introductory to the Book of Philippians.

Acts 16:6-9

"Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, (central Turkey) and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7. After they were come to Mysia, they assayed (intended) to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. (fairly close to the sea coast) 9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, (Northern Greece) and prayed (begged) him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us."

Paul gets the vision that they were to go across the Aegean Sea to Macedonia.

Acts 16:10

*"And after he had seen the vision, **immediately** (no argument, no debate, he knew the Lord was leading) **we (Luke is writing this)** endeavored to go into Macedonia assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them."*

The Gospel had never gone to the European Continent before this.

Acts 16:11-13

"Therefore loosing (they went by ship) from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; 12. And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: (it was a Roman colony which meant that they had certain amount of freedom) and we were in that city abiding certain days. 13. And on the sabbath (Saturday sabbath) we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither."



Apparently there was no synagogue in Philippi; it required at least 10 Jewish men to organize one. So this was a group of Jewish women who were gathering.

Lydia

Acts 16:14

"A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, (the most expensive of dyes) of the city of Thyatira, (in Asia) which worshipped God, (not saved yet) heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

Lydia was from Thyatira, which is in Asia (known for its purple dye), but she also has a house in Philippi (vs 15, both were major metropolitan areas). She has rejected paganism and polytheism and joined in the worship of the God of the Jews.

NOTICE: The Lord opened Lydia's heart and she listened to Paul.

Acts 16:15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

The Slave Girl

Acts 16:16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

Acts 16:17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation.

Acts 16:18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

Next we see Paul and Silas were taken to the authorities and charged with causing trouble (vs 20) and teaching things that opposed Roman law (vs 21)

Acts 16:19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

Acts 16:20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

Acts 16:21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

Acts 16:22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

The Jailer

Acts 16:23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

Acts 16:24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

Acts 16:25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

Acts 16:26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

Acts 16:27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

Acts 16:28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

Acts 16:29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

Acts 16:30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Acts 16:32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

Acts 16:33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

Acts 16:34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

The Three

This was the beginning of the church in Philippi.

- Lydia: who represents the intellectual and successful who needed Jesus
- The slave girl: who represents the emotional and controlled person who also needs Jesus
- The Jailer: who was indifferent and duty bound to do his job and he also needs Jesus

The Letter to the Church at Philippi

- This was written from Rome, while Paul was in jail. The other prison epistles are Ephesians, Colossians, I and II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.
- Nero was in power at that time Paul was in jail in Rome. Nero considered himself god.
- The Roman Empire had almost forgotten the mythological gods, and it had become a worship of "Caesar," and in this case it's "Nero." This even made it harder for Paul while in prison. Rome was the seat of world power, they thought they were the seat of world religion, because the emperor was now god. This also was what caused so much persecution of believers, because when they proclaimed Christ, that meant they had turned their back on the Roman power.
- Paul's was held right next to the palace of Nero. It was more of a house arrest, meaning He's probably associated more closely with the praetorian guards which were right next to the palace.

Paul Wrote from a Roman Prison

- Imprisonment by Roman was rarely long-term. Most prisoners were awaiting either trial or execution, but debtors would be released if their friends or family paid their debt (Matt. 18:30).
- Non-Roman citizens of any status were often treated badly, but Roman citizens were treated better and usually under a house arrest that was more comfortable for the prisoner. They were chained to a guard but could still host visitors.
- This was the case for Paul. He was held in relative comfort under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:16).
- In Rome, Paul was responsible for caring himself during his confinement, including his meals and clothes (Acts 28:30). Because Paul was a Roman citizen, he was eligible for a daily food allowance, but Paul depended on his friends and fellow believers to supply this food.
- While under house arrest in Rome, Paul was guarded around the clock by soldiers of the elite Praetorian Guard.
- When Paul was arrested again, a few years after this letter was written, he was probably placed in an underground cell somewhere in Rome. Tradition tells that Paul was executed by beheading outside the city.

(Phil 1:1) Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Notice that the church had grown since Acts 16 when they met by the river (mentions bishops/deacons)

Paul mentions himself as a servant of Jesus, not an apostle of Jesus.

*****This letter is written to his friends.** It is not about his authority to teach doctrine.

In Galatians, Paul sounds fighting mad and tells them in no uncertain terms they are off track.

In Romans, Paul sounds like a theology professor.

In Thessalonians, Paul sounds like a youth leader giving encouragement & empowering them.

In Philippians, Paul does not give a theology lesson or a problem-solving manual, he just talks about his joy in the Lord.

Written c.61AD while Paul was still under house arrest in Rome, awaiting his trial before the emperor Nero

JOY OR REJOICING:

16x in this letter

Philippians is a thank-you letter filled with an endless stream of joyful remembrances and encouragements.

*******All of Philippians is about learning how our relationship with Christ impacts our inner response to difficult external events.

(Phil 1:1) Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

So we are going to look at Philipians through the lens of difficult circumstances:

Throughout the Bible, we find examples of people who struggled with life's most difficult trials.

David, Elijah, and Jeremiah had bouts of fear, anxiety, and depression.

Job experienced confusion and suffered physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Habakkuk had great concerns that led to serious questions.

All who built the early church experienced both rejection and persecution.

Paul often felt overwhelmed.

Peter always seemed to be in some kind of conflict.

We also know that Charles Spurgeon suffered from great depression

Martin Luther, who struggled with anxiety, said that to deal effectively with life's daily fears, we must first deal with life's ultimate fear.

And that ultimate fear is found in Hebrews 2:15 that tells apart from Christ, people live every day in slavery to the fear of death, which is separation from God.

Heb 2:15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

We can learn a great deal from the "great cloud of witnesses" ([Heb 12:2](#)) who have gone before us in the faith and now live in glory with the Lord.

Philippians is unique in that the letter has no criticism for the church at Philippi. This is a mature church with maturing believers

(Phil 1:2) Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.



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Paul starts as he does with his other letters: Grace first, then peace. Because without the Grace of God, one cannot have the peace of God.

Think of the gospel of saving grace as a tree — the tree Jesus died on.

Grace is the root of that tree and peace is the fruit



(Phil 1:3) I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

Paul remembers being in Philippi; and how the Lord opened the hearts of people from all socio-economic backgrounds to build the church (remember wealthy Lydia, the slave girl; duty bound jailer)

When Paul remembers them, he turns his thoughts to the One who deserves the glory for the church and its people and gives thanks. Thankfulness to God will always bring rest for the soul and joy in daily life.

Psa 63:5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:

Psa 63:6 When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

(Phil 1:4) Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

This is the first mention of "joy" in Philippians.

DEFINITION OF JOY:

Christian joy is a good feeling in the soul, produced by the Holy Spirit, as He causes us to see the beauty of Christ in the Word and in the World.

[[MINE: Joy is not like a birthday or holiday celebration. **It's more like a burning in the soul fueled by hope, peace and trust in Jesus. Joy generates excitement and it also gives rest.** Just like a burning fire, joy will warm you and also give light to all that surrounds.]]j

Psa 16:11 Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

*2 Cor 1:3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;
2 Cor 1:4 Who comforts us in all our tribulation [so we can have joy in all things], that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble [so they can have joy in whatever trouble they are in], by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. [the comfort we have received, we give out to others].*

(Phil 1:4) Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

Joy is second only to love in the fruit of the Spirit.

*Neh 8:10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; **for the joy of the LORD is your strength.***

- Be filled with joy Ezra 6:22; Psalm 16:11; Psalm 126:3; Matthew 28:8; Acts 2:28; Acts 14:17; 2 Timothy 1:4;
- Be clothed with joy Psalm 30:11;
- Be led with joy Psalm 45:15;
- Celebrate with joy Ezra 6:22;
- Shout with joy Psalm 66:1;
- Swell with joy Isaiah 60:5;
- Sing with joy Jeremiah 31:7;
- Pray with joy Philippians 1:4;

Whatever we are are doing, we are to do it with joy—the joy of the Lord (not looking at circumstances; looking at Jesus)

(Phil 1:5) For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

Paul is commending them for continuing in fellowship, since the time the church began.

(Phil 1:6) Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

I believe that confidence is one of the most important attributes that we should attain to.

Confidence is:

- 1. First, born or knowledge,*
- 2. Then strengthened by believing, and*
- 3. Finally, demonstrated by trusting.*

So confidence comes from knowing, believing, and trusting — that's faith. Therefore I believe confidence is a fruit of the Spirit — it's called faithfulness.

Confidence is trusting that God will work, consistent with His good nature and in accordance with His character.

Paul looked at these people with the eyes of faith, knowing God would perfect them. Our goal in life is to attain perfection and it will happen, but not by our works. Only by God's work and only fully when we go to be with Jesus.

(Phil 1:6) Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

*Psa 138:8 **The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: ...***

1 Cor 1:8 Who shall also confirm [sustain] you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul's confidence is placed in a Person, not in himself. All true believers are in the hands of the One who can change them and will change them. God will bring circumstances that will change us for His purpose...which is to conform us to Jesus.]]

"you" here is plural; he's speaking of the church. to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:" (v. 1)

THE DAY OF CHRIST

Only Paul speaks of the Day of Christ.

This is the Rapture — it is not the same as the Day of the Lord

There are many “days” spoken of in Scripture:

- Day of Man: 1 Cor 4:3 (Gen 3, Dan 2) the day of man ends with Great Tribulation
- Day of Christ: 1 Cor 1:7,8, 5:5, 2 Cor 1:14, Phil 1:6, 10, 2:16; the Rapture: John 14:1-3
- Day of the Lord is used throughout the Bible as a day of judgment; a day of tribulation. It climaxes with the Second Coming of Jesus.
- Day of God Almighty: Armageddon (Rev 16:14)
- That Day, or In That Day: specific days in the time period from the Rapture to the Great White Throne Judgment

THE DAY OF CHRIST

OT sages believed that human history would be six thousand years and the 7th thousand year period would be the sabbath

Early church fathers believed in the millennial reign (sabbath)

Cyprian, bishop of Carthage;

Ireaneas (130-200) declared Jesus will sit in the temple of Jerusalem.

Tertullian (150) "the kingdom is promised to us on this earth, but before, Heaven, only in another state of existence... after for 1,000 years in the divinely rebuilt city of Jerusalem."

Dr, Adolf Harnack of Berlin in his contribution to Encyclopedia Britannica wrote that **the doctrine of Christ's return and reign on earth appears so early that perhaps it should be considered essential Christian doctrine.**

All early scholars (except Origen and a few others who rejected book of Revelation) believed in the millennial reign.

In the first and second centuries, only those who denied the resurrection denied the belief in a thousand year reign of Christ.

Justin Martyr, circa 100 AD, was asked by Trypho (a Jerusalem rabbi) if he believed Jerusalem would be rebuilt and Christians would rejoice with Messiah the Christ and patriarchs and prophets. Justin Martyr answered saying that Christians believe this shall be, but many who claim to be Christians do not and preach false doctrines claiming no resurrection of the dead. They are not Christians." [He said], "John, a certain man among us, prophesied [this]."

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

1 Th 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Rev 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

(Phil 1:7) Even as it is meet [appropriate] for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all [every member of the Philippian church] are partakers of my grace.

The Greek words translated imprisonment or bonds, defense, and confirmation have courtroom meanings. Paul is saying that the Philippian believers shared with him in his courageous witness in the law court in Rome.

We aren't in an actual prison, but we are confined — chained by unpleasant circumstances. Paul here wrote to his brothers and sisters in the faith. We are fortunate through modern technology to be able to connect virtually — and for that we are all thankful.

There are four gospels written of in Scripture.

- 1.the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, given to Israel
- 2.the gospel of the grace of God, given to the unsaved sinner
- 3.Paul's gospel given to the church, the Body of Christ
- 4.the everlasting gospel given to Tribulation Gentiles.

(Phil 1:8) For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels [affection] of Jesus Christ.

Newer translations use affection; but there's more to it.

The Jews used bowels to mean innermost being, so using affection should be inward affection. This is a heart condition that is deeply felt. We can understand it as our "gut feelings."

But we always want our "gut feelings" or innermost affections to be influenced by the Word. Paul's words support this, as he started with "**God is my record.**" Paul constantly prayed that believers would gain knowledge — knowledge of God. Again, the importance of reading and studying the Bible— so we are transformed by the Word of truth and not conformed to the lies of the world.

bowels [affection]: 4698. splanchnon, splangkh'-non; prob. strengthened from splen, (the "spleen"); an intestine (plur.); fig. pity or sympathy:--bowels, inward affection, + tender mercy

(Phil 1:9) And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

Your love abound one to the other. He's not saying loving everyone. He says your love abound in knowledge and judgment. That means your love abound in the TRUTH.

Phil 1:9: study the word! 2 Cor 8:7, 2 Pet 1:8

2 Pet 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Cor 8:7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Prov 18:15 The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

Psa 119:66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments. (1 John 2:3-4)

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

(Phil 1:9) And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

Knowledge: 1922. epignosis, ep-ig'-no-sis; from G1921; recognition, i.e. (by impl.) full discernment, acknowledgment:--(ac-) knowledge (-ing, -ment).

[[[Loving Jesus comes from knowing Jesus]]]

Daniel said **knowledge will increase in the last days**, but it's not knowledge of God:

Dan 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

They will learn more and more in the last days, but they won't come to the knowledge of the Truth.

(Phil 1:10) That ye may approve [discern, examine] things that are excellent
["excellent" also means different]; that ye may be sincere and without offence
till the day of Christ;

that you may discern things that are different -- this could refer to discerning between law and grace or things of God and things of the world

sincere: without wax -- 1506. eilikrines, i-lik-ree-nace'; from heile (the sun's ray) and G2919; judged by sunlight, i.e. tested as genuine (fig.):--pure, sincere.

Day of Christ - we discussed on vs 6



(Phil 1:11) Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

Our good works come from His Spirit working in and through us

Summing up verses 1-11. Paul loves these people in Philippi. The church started small and grew. Paul's letter to them was filled with words of affirmation and affection that are not found in his other letters. In letters Paul wrote to other churches, he wrote more about God's love, but in his letter to the church at Philippi he wrote about his deep love for them.

Thoughts for the week:

1. Who are the “Pauls” in your life? Past / Present

2. Is your glass half empty or half full? And what is the real question?

Watch: <https://reasonsforhopeJesus.com/thanksgiving-glass-empty-full/>

3. How is God at work in a believer's life according to verse 6 and 9-11?
Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,
And how does this make you feel about uncertainties in your life?

Phil 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;

Phil 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,

Phil 1:10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

Phil 1:11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1-11 — Precious Verses

Philippians 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

Philippians 1:9 *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*

Philippians 1:10 *That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.*

Philippians 1:11 *Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.*

Philippians 1:7 *Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.*

Philippians 1:2 *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Philippians 1:4 *Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,*