FREE SAMPLE

Teacher's Study Bible

King James Version

For Adult Bible Teachers and Students
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3. Introduction to the *Standard Lesson™ Teacher’s Study Bible*

4. What You’ll Find in the *Standard Lesson™ Teacher’s Study Bible*

5. For Teachers & Students

6. Features of the *Standard Lesson™ Teacher’s Study Bible*

10. Valuable Helps

12. Sample Book: Philippians

22. *Standard Lesson Commentary®*

23. More Resources

23. How to Order
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• Harmony of the Gospels
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• Comprehensive Time Line to Bible events
• Pronunciation Guide to help pronounce those hard-to-say names and places
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Introduction to

Philippians

AUTHOR AND AUDIENCE
The apostle Paul wrote this letter in response to a gift sent to him while he was imprisoned in Rome. Unlike modern Western prisons, ancient prisons did not always provide for the needs of prisoners. Friends and families had to do that. Paul relayed his thanks through the messenger from Philippi (Epaphroditus) and took the occasion to address some church-related issues that had been brought to his attention.

DATE WRITTEN
Paul was imprisoned between AD 60 and 62. The letter provides some indication that the verdict in his trial before Caesar was imminent, leading some to believe that the letter was written near the end of that period.

WHAT TO REVIEW BEFORE TEACHING PHILIPPIANS
History of the Church in Philippi (Acts 16:11-40). Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke founded the congregation during the second missionary journey. While it was not unusual for the gospel to meet with opposition, hostility in Philippi came from a different source than usual. Leaders of local synagogues and the Jewish leaders often incited the crowds against Paul, but that did not seem to be the case here. In fact, a Jewish presence was minimal. Rather, secular Greek (and obviously anti-Jewish) sentiment fueled persecution.

Paul and the Judaisers (Galatians 2:11-21; Acts 15:5). Even when there was not a strong Jewish presence in the vicinity of a new church, sometimes opposition was imported. Believers who taught that one must keep Jewish law (including the ritual of circumcision) before becoming a Christian traveled to new churches, causing disruption. This seemed to have become an issue at Philippi in the decade after the church was founded.

The Nature of Paul’s Imprisonment (Acts 28:16, 30, 31). While the circumstances of Paul’s imprisonment were not brutal or inhumane, the charges were still serious. The palace guard oversaw his captivity, and the emperor at the time was the often unpredictable Nero Caesar.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS ANSWERED IN PHILIPPIANS
How should church politics be addressed? Assess whether or not it is keeping the gospel from being preached (1:15-18). Ask a mature believer to mediate personality conflicts (4:2, 3).

Is there hope when the world is so uncertain? Hold on to the promise that, for the believer, the best days are always yet to come (1:21).

How can we make sure our church has an impact on our community? Attitude is as important as actions (2:14-16).
TEACHING THROUGH PHILIPPIANS

1. PROCLAIM CHRIST (even in tough times)—1:1–26
   “I would that ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel” (1:12).
2. IMITATE CHRIST (by valuing service more than status)—1:27–2:30
   “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (2:4).
3. TRUST CHRIST (rather than yourself for salvation)—3:1–4:1
   “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ” (3:7).
4. REJOICE IN CHRIST (because victory is ours)—4:2–23
   “I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content” (4:11).

PAUL AND PHILIPPI

Philippi was a difficult mission field. It was founded by Phillip II of the Hellenistic Empire in the fourth century BC and retained a strong Greek heritage. During the height of the Hellenistic Empire, the humanistic Greeks showed such disdain for religion in general and Judaism in particular that it led to open hostility. No doubt that same humanistic spirit was present in Philippi.

The lack of Jewish influence in Philippi became obvious when Paul looked for a synagogue and found none. Apparently the Jewish community did not contain the number of willing men required to establish a synagogue. In its place was a group of Jewish women gathered for prayer.

This group was receptive to the gospel, however. Ironically, the “Macedonian man” of Paul’s famous vision ended up being a group of women!

After leaving Philippi (apparently leaving Luke there, judging from the return to a third-person description), Paul, Silas, and Timothy went on to start congregations in Macedonia and Achaia (southern Greece). Luke does not begin using a first-person narration again until the missionaries return to Philippi during the third missionary journey (Acts 20:5), possibly indicating that he ministered there during that extended period. Philippi, then, marked the edge of a new frontier—the place at which the gospel entered Europe.
1004  PHILIPPIANS 3:9

do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,
9 And be found in him, not having "mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but through the faith of Christ, which is of God by faith:
10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;
11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

PRESSING TOWARD THE GOAL

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already "perfect: but this one thing I do, for to things which are behind, and unto those things which are
14 "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
15 Let us therefore, as many as be "perfect, "be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.
16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk "by the same rule, "let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, "be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.
18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are "the enemies of the cross of Christ:
19 Whose end is destruction, "whose God is their belly, and "whose glory is in their shame, "who mind earthly things.)
20 For "our conversation is in heaven; there also we "look for the Saviour, even Christ:

3:10, 11 The journey to "know (Christ), and the power of his resurrection is ongoing. Christ's resurrection guarantees our own resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:13-14). We are made conformable unto his death initially in baptism (Romans 6:4, 5) and continue to conform daily (see 2 Corinthians 4:10, 11).

3:12 "Apprehended" has the sense of "make something one's possession." In saying "apprehended of Christ Jesus, Paul was affirming that he was Christ's possession. That is a fact, a done deal. But part of this process would be Paul's apprehension, or capture, of himself; his job was not done, his life was not perfect.

3:13, 14 Paul continued by using the analogy of a footrace. The great runners do not look back to see where they have been. Their focus is on the mark (the goal) and the prize that awaits. As Christ said, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

3:15, 16 This race is the most important thing in all of life. It is for the perfect, the "mature." We become mature as we continue the race with our fellow believers. With maturity comes agreement. This makes a church in which members walk "by the same rule and mind the same thing.

3:17 Paul turned back to his argument against false teachers from the beginning of the chapter. What was the cure for false doctrine? Be "followers together of me. The closer the Philippians examined Paul's life, the clearer it would be that it was he they should follow (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1).

3:18, 19 Paul turned up the intensity of his warning. The enemies of the cross of Christ can include both Jew and Gentile (1 Corinthians 12:22, 23). The enemies are identified by four characteristics. First, their end is destruction. Life will not end well for them. Second, their God is their belly. They are not controlled by the Holy Spirit, but by the appetites of the flesh. Third, their glory is in their shame. They celebrate that which should embarrass them. Finally, they mind earthly things. They live selfishly and materialistically, as if this world is all there is.

3:20 The word translated "conversation" is a political word having the sense of "citizenship." Since Philippi was a Roman colony (Acts 16:12), the idea of citizenship resonated deeply with the people there. Paul no doubt tried to draw on civic pride by reminding the believers that they were citizens of Heaven.
21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body; according to the working whereby he is able e even to subdue all things unto himself.

PLEA FOR THE FEUD TO END BETWEEN EUODIAS AND SYNTYPHE

4 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I intreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which have laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

THE PEACE OF GOD TRANSCENDS ALL UNDERSTANDING

4 a Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 a Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And a the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 a Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and a the God of peace shall be with you.

3:21 Citizenship has its privileges. First, Christ will make our current bodies like unto his glorious body. Then Christ will subdue all things unto himself. All enemies will be vanquished, including death (1 Corinthians 15:25, 26).

4:1 The quest spoken of in the preceding verse allowed Paul to consider the Philippian’s his crown. This word (stephanos in Greek) has the sense here of “reward,” not royalty. It complements Paul’s race analogy, since it is the victor’s wreath awarded in athletic contests. Paul will then continue, explaining the implications of living like winners.

4:2, 3 Stop the infighting! The varies names of the Philippians involved show the foolishness of winners fighting among themselves. Euodias (“sweet smell” like incense burned in celebration) and Syntyche (“happy event” like a victory party) should have been doing anything but bickering! Paul called on a man he described as his true yoke – fellow (a picture of two service animals working together in harmony) to mediate the dispute. Clement (think of the English word “clemency”) is also mentioned, illustrating the need for mercy and grace in the midst of conflict.

4:4-7 Other marks of a victorious life: Rejoice—This is not mindless, oblivious revelry, but a re-collention of all the things that come from a victorious Savior. Moderation—This has the sense of courteous and gentle; solid, dependable. His eyes of outsiders. Careful for nothing—Anxiety, not caution. Turning to God for serenity.

4:9, 10 The sad fact is that morality and morality: Teardrops of truth, lacking honesty, perverts personal purity, exploits beauty, and disregards the need for a

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

In what ways have you seen people willingly accept loss for the sake of Christ? How have things turned out for them?

Talking Points for Your Discussion

- Leaving a high-paying job for the mission field
- Downsizing one’s lifestyle so more may be given to kingdom work
- Being ostracized by family members for becoming a Christian
- Other

Discussion questions with “talking points” for deeper understanding

Cross-references to other relevant passages
VALUABLE HELPS

Here are some of the valuable helps that make it easy for teachers to prepare and present Sunday school and Bible study lessons for students at every level of Bible knowledge.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE
Simple, clear guide shows how to say those difficult-to-pronounce Bible words and names.

CONCORDANCE
Concordance shows important words and their location in the Bible.
HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS
Provides an overview of key events in the life of Jesus and their occurrence in each of the four Gospels.

**Part Second:**
Beginning of the Ministry of John the Baptist, the Forerunner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Part Third:**
Beginning of Our Lord’s Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. John’s First Testimony to Jesus</td>
<td>John 1:19-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Jesus Makes His First Disciples</td>
<td>John 1:35-51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Jesus Works His First Miracle at Cana in Galilee</td>
<td>John 2:1-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Jesus’ First Residence at Capernaum</td>
<td>John 2:12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMPREHENSIVE TIME LINE
The time line shows teachers and students how God’s plan has unfolded throughout the ages.

PREHISTORY
A perfect world is created, but it is marred with the intrusion of evil. God confronts evil, and people struggle with the issue of God’s power, nature, and justice.

DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN
The Bible in 12 Months reading plan enables students to read the entire Bible in one year.

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Week 1
1. Matt. 1:1-17; Acts 1:1-11; Ps. 1; Gen. 1, 2
2. Matt. 1:18-25; Acts 1:12-26; Ps. 2; Gen. 3, 4
3. Matt. 2:1-12; Acts 2:1-21; Ps. 3; Gen. 5-8
4. Matt. 2:13-23; Acts 2:22-47; Ps. 4; Gen. 9-11
5. Matt. 3:1-12; Acts 3; Ps. 5; Gen. 12-14
6. Matt. 3:13-17; Acts 4:1-22; Ps. 6; Gen. 15-17

Week 2
7. Matt. 4:1-11; Acts 4:23-37; Ps. 7; Gen. 18-20
8. Matt. 4:12-23; Ps. 8; Gen. 21-23

Week 7
36. Matt. 14:22-36; Acts 20:13-38; Ps. 34; Ex. 30, 31
37. Matt. 1:51-20; Acts 21:1-26; Ps. 35; Ex. 32, 33
38. Matt. 1:52-1; Acts 21:27-40; Ps. 36; Ex. 34
39. Matt. 1:61-12; Acts 22; Ps. 37:1-22; Ex. 35-37
41. Matt. 1:71-13; Acts 23:12-35; Ps. 38; Lev. 1-4

Week 8
42. Matt. 1:71-27; Acts 24; Ps. 39; Lev. 5, 7
43. Matt. 1:81-14
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Paul gives thanks for the Philippians

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:

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

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

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:

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 defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more—in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ;

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

The gospel is advanced by Paul's chains

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are

1:3, 4 Christianity is the relational religion. Paul's intercessory prayer was offered with joy. This Greek word for joy is based on the same root as the word for thank in verse 3. Paul made his requests with joy because he knew that God heard his prayers and was able to answer his prayers.

1:5, 6 The word for fellowship (koinonia) means a partnership, a sharing in the life of others. The same word is translated contribution in Romans 15:26. Real fellowship is to contribute something of oneself to the lives of others. This will allow God to perform His good work in the church—members who grow up into the likeness of Christ (Ephesians 4:15).

1:7, 8 It is meet is an archaic way of saying "It is right," or "It is appropriate." Some people could say, "You are on my list" or "You are on my nerves" or "You worry me," but Paul says it is right that the Philippians are in his heart and prayers.

1:9-11 Paul revealed the content of his prayers for the Philippians. He prayed that their love may abound yet more and more—including more people and doing more for others. Furthermore, that real love acts in knowledge and in all judgment. That is, when our love grows in knowledge and discernment, we become wise enough to recognize and approve things that are excellent. In knowing what is excellent and loving it, we develop good character, sincere and without offence. From this character, we yield the fruits of righteousness—good deeds that bring the glory and praise of God.

1:12-14 When Paul visited the temple in Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey (about AD 56), he was seized by a mob and falsely accused of defiling the sacred precincts (Acts 21:1-30). Roman governor Felix held Paul in custody for two years (24:24-27). In about AD 60, the new governor, Festus,

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How have you seen God use difficult circumstances for His glory?

Talking Points for Your Discussion

- In crisis resolution
- In divorce recovery
- In grief support
- During persecution
- Other

1:1-11 Acts 1:2, 12; 2:40; 3:2; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Tim. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:8; 9:15, 18; Eph. 1:15; 6:24; 1 Thess. 2:13, 17; 2 Cor. 5:19; Phil. 1:3; 2 Tim. 4:20; 1 Thess. 2:17; 3:10; Acts 21:25; Acts 27:21; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:12; 4:15; 1 Tim. 4:12; Tit. 2:14; 3:12; 1 Thess. 2:10; 5:15; Eph. 2:1; 1 Thess. 4:17; 1 Cor. 15:24; 1 Thess. 4:13; 5:17; Acts 26:14; 1 Thess. 1:3; 3:22; 1 Cor. 15:3; 5:23; 1 Cor. 1:8; 1:11; 1 Tim. 1:19; 1:20; 1 Thess. 1:13; 2 Thess. 3:16. 4:22;
much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

LIFE IS CHRIST, DEATH IS GAIN

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether I live by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what shall I choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

TO SUFFER FOR CHRIST IS A PRIVILEGE

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind

28 granted Paul's appeal to Caesar, which resulted in his ending up in Rome (25:1-6). There he spent two more years in custody, under house arrest (28:16, 30).

29 How could such injustice further the spread of the gospel? For one, many of the imperial guard, whom Paul otherwise would not have met, were able to hear his message. Some of Caesar's household became believers (Philippians 4:22). Second, Paul's willingness to preach an unsanctified message in the face of suffering inspired many of the brethren in the Lord to step out boldly. If Paul had not been imprisoned, perhaps these people would not have found the warfare (confidence) they now demonstrated.

1:15-18 Church politics is nothing new! Those who had issues with Paul's leadership viewed his imprisonment as a chance to advance their own agendas. Some may merely have wanted to be in charge (3 John 9); others may have disagreed with Paul's doctrinal viewpoints. After stating both the positive and negative sides of the issue, Paul concluded that the situation called for rejoicing. Despite wrong motives, Paul's enemies were at least proclaiming the gospel of Christ!

1:19, 20 Paul could have a positive outlook not only because the spread of the gospel continued but also because he remained confident that God was working out a plan that would lead to his release from prison. (The word salvation as used in this context refers to this anticipated release.) Yet whether he lived or died, he wanted to honor Christ. If freed, Paul would continue preaching; if condemned, he would die with a clear conscience.

1:21-23 This brings Paul to one of the grandest statements in all of Scripture: to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But which is better? I wot not is an old expression meaning "I don't know." On the one hand, Paul was confident that he would continue to be productive as long as he lived. On the other, Paul was under no illusion that life would get better, even if he were released from custody. Things would be much more pleasant for him if he were simply in Heaven!

1:24-26 There was one thing that caused Paul to desire continued life: he was needed. Paul ends this section on a positive note, anticipating that God will not only preserve his life but also secure his freedom so he may visit the Philippians.

1:27-30 Having raised the prospect of a future return to Philippi, Paul now tells some of his expectations. For one, he expected unity—striving together
striving together for the faith of the gospel;

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

CHRIST IS THE MODEL FOR HUMILITY

2 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

for the faith. Furthermore, just as Paul faced persecution with courage and confidence, he wanted the Philippians to boldly face those who opposed them.

2:1 Paul continued his list of expectations from the preceding chapter. Before listing his strongest expectations, he had the Philippians consider what Jesus had given them already: consolation (encouragement), comfort, fellowship, and bowels and mercies (tenderness and compassion).

2:2-5 With those gifts of God in mind, Paul asked that they respond by being united in their thinking and controlled by a spirit of love. Unity is not achieved when we try to outdo each other. True, lasting unity comes when all copies are made from an ultimate, unchanging pattern: Jesus himself. Our motivations must extend beyond the desire to avoid offending others. We must, like Jesus, sacrificially live to look out for the interests of others.

2:6-11 Many newer translations format this section as poetry, attempting to give the sense of how it may have been used in worship. The hymn begins with an affirmation of Jesus’ divine status before He came to earth as a man and ends by looking forward to a day of universal submission to Jesus as the King of kings.

2:6 In saying that Jesus thought it not robbery to be equal with God, Paul was affirming that Christ did not cling to His divinity with greedy selfishness. He did not need to struggle to be like God, as did the first Adam (Genesis 3). He already was God!

2:7 The expression made himself of no reputation is a startling description of what the incarnation entailed for the Son of God. The literal Greek says that Christ "emptied himself." Jesus became a man, with all the limitations that that demanded (John 1:14; Romans 8:3).

2:12-15 The command to work out your own salvation is not a command to work to earn salvation. Rather, Paul commanded the Philippians to live lives of selfless service as evidence that they have already been saved. We do not serve to be saved; we are saved to serve.

This obedient service must be sincere, not done from guilt or compulsion (2 Corinthians 9:7). It should not be accompanied by muttered grumbling (compare...
CHILDREN OF GOD SHOULD SHINE AS LIGHTS

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

PLANS ARE MADE TO SEND TIMOTHEUS AND EPAPHRODIUS TO THE PHILIPPANS

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

James 5:9) or diminished by infighting. The dedication to service is more than an internal material for the church. Rather, when the church community is seen as a harmonious, unselfish group of people who esteem each person in the group, outsiders will notice.

2:16-19 Paul did not suffer from any delusions that his plight in Rome was not serious. He may be offered as a sacrifice for his service to Christ. Yet he has everlasting joy knowing that his ministry to the Philippians truly changed them. To have laboured in vain would mean that the effects of his work were only temporary. When Paul meets Christ face-to-face, whether at death or at His return, he wants to be able to report the steadfastness of this congregation.

2:19-21 Paul's sense of responsibility for the welfare of the churches did not end with his imprisonment. He felt a burden for all congregations, wherever he was. Timothy's journey to Philippi would give Paul the opportunity to learn about the current state of the believers. Paul expressed the highest level of confidence in Timothy. This confidence was based on Timothy's unselfish character. Such a spirit was just the kind of influence the Philippians needed to solve their problems.

2:22 Paul illustrated Timothy’s qualification for service with terminology appropriate to a family business. Timothy had learned to serve with Paul in a subservient role, much like a son who learns the family business while his father supervises him. Timothy had submitted himself in such a way that he could faithfully carry out the wishes of the apostle.

If great things are to be accomplished in the church today, then believers will need to imitate the unselfishness of Timothy. This means that believers will not be concerned with getting due recognition or proper rewards for their efforts. Through such a spirit, unity in the church will be preserved, and the gospel will never be hampered by embarrassing church quarrels.

2:23-30 Paul would send this completed letter through a lesser-known servant of Jesus. Epaphroditus had been sent to Paul with gifts from the church at Philippi to sustain him during his imprisonment (4:18). During the grueling journey, Epaphroditus suffered a near-fatal illness. Paul praised his sacrifice and sent him home to his brothers and sisters in Christ. Timothy was well known, but Epaphroditus was not. Even today, God uses some to serve in the spotlight and others to serve behind the scenes.
26 "For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.
27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.
28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.
29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:
30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

TRUE CIRCUMCISION

3 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

2 "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ:

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and

3:1 The statement to "write the same things to you" was probably a cue that Paul was about to stress one of the key elements of his teaching.

3:2 That repeated theme is to be wary of the concision—those who insisted that following the law of Moses, including circumcision, was necessary for salvation. Paul used the strongest language possible, calling these teachers dogs and evil and calling circumcision concision, or mutilation.

3:3 By using the word we, Paul was informing the Philippians that he and they were the ones who (1) worship God in the spirit, (2) rejoice in Christ Jesus, and (3) have no confidence in the flesh. This implies that Paul's opponents didn't do these things.

3:4 When necessary, Paul did not hesitate to produce his Jewish credentials (Acts 26:4; 5; 2 Corinthians 11:22; Galatians 1:13, 14). To battle those who claimed that Jewish law keeping was necessary for salvation, Paul presented himself as the ideal Jew.

3:5, 6 He had been circumcised a week and a day after his birth (compare Leviticus 12:3). He was of the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of King Saul (1 Samuel 9:21). Paul also was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, one who had not adopted Greek ways as had many of the Jews of the day. He was also a Pharisee and had actually once persecuted those who taught salvation apart from works as he was doing now!

3:7-9 When Jesus intervened in Paul's life on the road to Damascus, Paul began to understand that "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23). An older use of the English word suffer can mean "permit." When Paul said that he suffered the loss of all things, Paul was not claiming that he had suffered in his commitment to ministry for Christ. Rather, he allowed himself to trade the identity of a "righteous Jew" for the identity of a sinner saved by grace.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

In what area of your life do you need to relinquish your "rights," humble yourself, and/or sacrificially help others? How does Jesus' example help you do this?

Talking Points for Your Discussion

- The roadblock of an entitlement mentality
- Viewing certain tasks as beneath us
- Maintaining a proper motive
do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,
9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:
10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;
11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

PRESSEING TOWARD THE GOAL

12 Not as though I had already attained, or was already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.
16 Nevertheless, wheroeto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:
19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

3:10, 11 The journey to know [Christ], and the power of his resurrection is ongoing. Christ’s resurrection guarantees our own resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-34). We are made conformable unto his death initially in baptism (Romans 6:3, 4) and continue to conform daily (see 2 Corinthians 4:10, 11).

3:12 Apprehended has the sense of “make something one’s possession.” In saying apprehended of Christ Jesus, Paul was affirming that he was Christ’s possession. That is a fact, a done deal. But part of this process would be Paul’s apprehension, or capture, of himself. His job was not done; his life was not perfect.

3:13, 14 Paul continued by using the analogy of a footprint. The great runners do not look back to see where they have been. Their focus is on the mark (the goal) and the prize that awaits. As Christ said, “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62).

3:15, 16 This race is the most important thing in all of life. It is for the perfect, the “mature.” We become mature as we continue the race with our fellow believers. With maturity comes agreement. This makes for a church in which members walk by the same rule and mind the same thing.

3:17 Paul turned back to his argument against false teachers from the beginning of the chapter. What was the cure for false doctrine? Be followers together of me. The closer the Philippians examined Paul’s life, the clearer it would be that it was he they should follow (1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1).

3:18, 19 Paul turned up the intensity of his warning. The enemies of the cross of Christ can include both Jew and Gentile (1 Corinthians 1:22, 23). The enemies are identified by four characteristics. First, their end is destruction. Life will not end well for them. Second, their God is their belly. They are not controlled by the Holy Spirit, but by the appetites of the flesh. Third, their glory is in their shame. They celebrate that which should embarrass them. Finally, they mind earthly things. They live selfishly and materialistically, as if this world is all there is.

3:20 The word translated conversation is a political word having the sense of “citizenship.” Since Philippi was a Roman colony (Acts 16:12), the idea of citizenship resonated deeply with the people there. Paul no doubt tried to draw on civic pride by reminding the believers that they were citizens of Heaven.
21 *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, *according to the working whereby he is able *even to subdue all things unto himself.

**PLEA FOR THE FEUD TO END BETWEEN EUODIAS AND SYNTYCHE**

4 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, *my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, *that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which /laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in *the book of life.

**THE PEACE OF GOD TRANSCENDS ALL UNDERSTANDING**

4 *Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. *The Lord is at hand.*

6 *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

7 And *the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, *whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

9 *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and *the God of peace shall be with you.*

3:21 Citizenship has its privileges. First, Christ will make our current bodies like unto his glorious body. Then Christ will subdue all things unto himself. All enemies will be vanquished, including death (1 Corinthians 15:25, 28).

4:1 The conquest spoken of in the preceding verse allowed Paul to consider the Philippians his crown. This word (stephanos in Greek) has the sense here of “reward,” not royalty. It complements Paul’s race analogy, since it is the victor’s wreath awarded in athletic contests. Paul will then continue, explaining the implications of living like winners.

4:2, 3 Stop the infighting! The very names of the Philippians involved show the foolishness of winners fighting among themselves. Euodias (“sweet smell” like incense burned in celebration) and Syntyche (“happy event” like a victory party) should have been doing anything but bickering! Paul called on a man he described as his true yokefellow (a picture of two service animals working together in harmony) to mediate the dispute. Clement (think of the English word clemency) is also mentioned, illustrating the need for mercy and grace in the midst of conflict.

4:4-7 Other marks of a victorious life: Rejoice—This is not mindless, oblivious revelry, but a recollection of all the things that come from a victorious Savior. Moderation—This has the sense of being courteous and gentle; solid, dependable people in the eyes of outsiders. Careful for nothing—This refers to anxiety, not caution. Turning to God in prayer brings serenity.

4:8, 9 The sad fact is that modern society often fears truth, lacks honesty, perverts justice, ridicules purity, exploits beauty, and disregards the need for a

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**
In what ways have you seen people willingly accept loss for the sake of Christ? How have things turned out for them?

**Talking Points for Your Discussion**
- Leaving a high-paying job for the mission field
- Downsizing one’s lifestyle so more may be given to kingdom work
- Being ostracized by family members for becoming a Christian
- Other
Paul gives thanks to the Philippians for their generosity

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Final greetings and blessings

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Paul did not find pleasure in pain, but life had sent him more than his share of hardship. No matter what harsh realities and cruelties he encountered, Paul did not cry out to the Lord that he deserved better. No hardship could separate him from the love of Christ (Romans 8:35). His goal was not a life of ease, but the salvation of souls (2 Timothy 2:9, 10). Paul's pain was caused by the unbelief of his fellow Jews (Romans 9:1-3), by the betrayal of the gospel (Galatians 1:9), and other spiritual matters.

4:13 This is one of the most quoted yet misapplied verses in the Bible. Paul was speaking about enduring hardship. Some have come to the erroneous conclusion that when things seem impossible, it must be that we lack faith. But there were many things that Paul was unable to do. He was unable to persuade God to remove a physical infirmity from which he suffered (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). He was unable to keep Demas from deserting him (2 Timothy 4:10).

4:15-17 The church at Philippi lost no time in starting to give. Thessalonica was the first place Paul stopped to preach after he left Philippi. Paul was not praising the Philippians to get more from them, but in order to get more for them. When we share with the poor, we are making a loan to God. He will repay us (Proverbs 19:17).

4:18, 19 Paul called the gift a sweet smell (euodia). In doing so he may have been recognizing that Euodias (v. 2) was somehow instrumental in sending the gift. The Philippian church understood Paul's burning desire to take the gospel to people all over the Roman world (see Romans 1:14, 15). Paul assured them that God would supply their need to support this ministry that they shared (compare v. 19 with 2 Corinthians 9:8).

What do you think?

Is it really possible to rejoice always? Why, or why not?

Talking Points for Your Discussion
- A matter of focus
- A matter of priorities
- A difference between happiness and joy
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