



BIBLE STUDY

September 30, 2025
Instructor – Elder Sabrina Adams

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
2 Timothy 2:15

PHILIPPIANS

Theme:
Joyful Living Through Christ: Embracing Humility, Unity, and Perseverance in the Face of Trials.

INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS

I. THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS

- a. While Philippians is a book in the _____, it is also classified as an _____.
- b. An epistle is a _____ term meaning _____. It is a formal and instructive writing used primarily to _____, _____, or _____ one in their faith.

II. THE AUTHOR

- a. The author of the book is _____.
- b. The New Testament contains _____ epistles/letters and Paul is credited with _____ of them.

III. THE WRITINGS & LOCATION

- a. Paul wrote this letter around _____
- b. The letter is addressed to _____ in Philippi, which was the _____ church Paul founded

- in _____ during his
_____ missionary journey.
- c. The congregation is made up primarily of _____ believers.
 - d. Paul wrote this letter while under _____ in _____.
 - e. Philippians is classified as one of the _____ epistles.

IV. THE PURPOSE

- a. Philippians reflects Paul's _____ for the consistent care and support of the church in Philippi.
- b. Paul wanted to _____ them about his situation.
- c. Paul provides _____ of his hope to send _____ soon, as well as his decision to return Epaphroditus.
- d. He also addresses practical concerns, such as the _____ between the two women in the church.
- e. Paul weaves in doctrinal truths about the _____ of _____.

V. KEY PEOPLE

- ✓ Jesus Christ
- ✓ Paul
- ✓ Timothy
- ✓ Epaphroditus
- ✓ Euodia
- ✓ Syntyche

VI. SUGGESTED KEY VERSES

Philippians does not have one particular key verse, but these are suggested:

- a. Philippians 1:21 – *“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”*
- b. Philippians 4:4 – *“Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice.”*

PHILIPPIANS

“Joyful Living Through Christ: Embracing Humility, Unity, And Perseverance in the Face of Trials.”

AN OVERVIEW OF PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPIANS

	Joy in Living for Christ Even when we don't get what we want In spite of circumstances Even with conflicts CHAPTER 1	Joy in Serving Christ in Unity Starts with right attitude Maintained through right theology Encouraged by right models CHAPTER 2	Joy in Knowing Christ A warning A testimony A goal A command CHAPTER 3	Joy in Resting in Christ Unity Peace Final predictions CHAPTER 4
Christ	... my Life	... my Model	... my Goal	... my Contentment
Spirit	His provision (1:19)	His fellowship (2:1)	His worship (3:3)	His peace (4:7)
Positive Reaction	To difficulty: "Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel." (1:12)	To others: "Do all things without grumbling or disputing." (2:14)	To the past: "Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize." (3:13-14)	To the "unchangeables": "Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." (4:11)
Tone	Warm, encouraging, affirming			
Key Words	"Rejoice," "Christ," "Mind," "Act"			
Uniqueness	No major problem passages. "Joy" is found in each chapter. Not one quotation from the Old Testament. Christ mentioned over forty times. Most positive of all Paul's letters, yet written while he was chained to a Roman guard.			
Theme	By centering our lives around Christ, we can experience true joy.			
Key Verse	1:21			
Christ in Philippians	Jesus is the Son of God from heaven, who humbled Himself by becoming human, who suffered for us, and who was exalted to heaven (2:5-11).			

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SUMMARY CHART

PHILIPPIANS: the Joy of Christ-Likeness				
CHAPTER	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR
RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST	Proclaim Christ	Be Humble Like Christ	Suffer with Christ	Rejoice in Christ
RESULT OF RELATING TO CHRIST	Leads to Courage (1:14)	Leads to Light (2:16)	Leads to Perseverance (3:13ff)	Leads to Peace (4:7)
EXAMPLES	Paul in Prison	Timothy in "Life" Epaphroditus in "Death"	Paul in Christ's Righteousness Enemies in Self-Righteousness	Women in Disharmony Paul in Humility and Prosperity
KEY VERSES	"Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (1:20b-21).	"...with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself" (2:3b).	"I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things" (3:8).	"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice" (4:4)!
THEME:	"And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ..." (1:9-10).			

<https://wordsofgrace.blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/11-philippians-chart.jpg>

KEY THEMES IN PHILIPPIANS

➤ **Joy in Christ (Joy in the Midst of Suffering)**

True joy is rooted in Christ, not circumstances.

- Philippians 1:18; 1:38; 3:10–11; 4:4; 4:12–13

➤ **Unity through Humility (The Mind of Christ)**

Christlike humility creates harmony in the church.

- Philippians 2:2–4; 2:5–11; 2:8

➤ **Partnership in the Gospel (Koinonia/Fellowship)**

Sharing in the work of the gospel strengthens both mission and community.

- Philippians 1:5; 2:25–30; 4:15–16

➤ **Suffering for Christ**

Enduring trials with faith advances God's kingdom.

- Philippians 1:12–14; 1:29

➤ **Citizenship and Identity in Heaven**

Our ultimate allegiance is to God's kingdom, not earthly powers.

- Philippians 3:20

➤ **Striving for Christlikeness (Spiritual Maturity and Progress)**

Spiritual growth requires pressing forward toward Christ daily.

- Philippians 3:7–8; 3:13–14

➤ **Confidence in Christ (God's Work in the Believer)**

God is faithful to complete what He starts in us as we participate obediently.

- Philippians 1:6; 2:12–13

➤ **Warnings Against False Teaching**

Righteousness comes through faith, not human effort or rules.

- Philippians 3:2–3; 3:9

➤ **Christ Revealed (Deity, Humanity, Humility, Exaltation)**

Christ's life and sacrifice model the ultimate example for believers.

- Philippians 2:5–11

➤ **The Holy Spirit at Work**

The Spirit guides, unites, and inspires believers in life and worship.

- Philippians 1:19; 2:1; 3:3

BACKGROUND ON THE CITY OF PHILIPPI

Thracian Origins

- Philippi began as a Thracian settlement called Krenides.
- Thracians: ancient Indo-European people in modern Bulgaria, northeastern Greece, and European Turkey.
- Known for:
 - Warrior tribes skilled in metalwork, horsemanship, and trade.
 - Settlements in strategic locations: river valleys, hills, near trade routes.
 - Villages ranged from small communities to fortified towns.

Macedonian Influence

- 357 BC: Philip II of Macedon (Alexander the Great's father) took over the settlement.
- Rebuilt it into a military base and named it Philippi.
- Benefited from nearby gold mines and fertile farmland.
- Located 10 miles north of the Aegean Sea along the Egnatian Way (major trade route linking Rome and Asia).

Roman Colony

- 42 BC: Battle of Philippi; Antony & Octavian defeated Brutus and Cassius.
- Veterans settled in the city after the battle.
- 30 BC: Octavian (Augustus) established Philippi as a Roman colony.
 - Full Roman citizenship for settlers.
 - City prospered economically and culturally.

Population and Culture

- Population ~10,000: Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, small number of Jews.
- Latin = official language; city modeled after Rome.
- Archaeological highlights: forum, baths, fountains, shops, theater, school of medicine.
- Religious landscape: imperial worship expected; more than 35 deities worshiped; influences from Asia Minor and Egypt.
- Philippi was a crossroads of culture, religion, and trade.

The People of Philippi

- Roman Citizens: legal protections, tax benefits, civic pride.
- Military Veterans: strong military culture and loyalty to Rome.
- Economically Diverse: wealthy merchants, artisans, laborers; near gold mines & trade route.
- Spiritually Curious: small Jewish population; openness to God-fearing Gentiles like Lydia (Acts 16:13–15).
- Faithful and Generous: supported Paul financially and spiritually, even during imprisonment.

Government & Civic Structure

- Governed under Roman law as a colony.
- Local Magistrates (Duumviri) oversaw civic order and legal matters (Acts 16:20–22).
- Roman Citizenship gave rights and protections; influenced reactions to perceived threats.
- Military influence from retired soldiers shaped civic pride.
- Latin used for official documents and inscriptions.

Why This Matters

- Explains Paul's Roman citizenship significance (Acts 16:37).
- Shows why the city reacted strongly to challenges to Roman customs (Acts 16:21).
- Contextualizes how the early church navigated politically charged environments.
- Sets the stage for understanding Paul's instructions on joy, unity, humility, and faith in the Philippian church.



THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI

How the Church Started

- During Paul's second missionary journey, Philippi became home to some of the first European believers.
- Paul received a vision in Troas of a man from Macedonia asking for help (Acts 16:9–10).
- Paul and Silas sailed to Neapolis and traveled along the Egnatian Way to Philippi.
- On the Sabbath, they went outside the city gates to a place of prayer, likely along the Krenides River.
- There they shared the gospel with women gathered to worship, including Lydia of Thyatira.
 - Lydia and her household were baptized.
 - She invited Paul and his companions to stay at her home, providing a base for ministry.

Challenges & Miracles

- Paul cast out a spirit of divination from a slave girl, which angered her owners.
- They dragged Paul and Silas before the magistrates, who ordered them beaten and imprisoned.
- In prison, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns.
- An earthquake freed the prisoners' chains and opened the doors.
- Paul and Silas chose not to escape, leading the jailer and his household to believe (Acts 16:25–34).
- The next day, the magistrates released Paul and Silas, who visited the new believers before continuing to Thessalonica.

Lessons from Paul's Example

- Setbacks can be setups: Paul's imprisonment advanced the gospel rather than stopping it.
- Joy in trials: Paul's faith and singing in prison demonstrate spiritual strength and joy in adversity.
- Impact of faithful witness: Lydia, the jailer, and their households became part of the growing church.
- Encouragement to believers: Philippians teaches us to see challenges as opportunities for God's work.

Philippian's Connection to Acts

Event	Acts Reference	Philippians Connection
Paul's Macedonian vision	Acts 16:9–10	Leads Paul to Philippi
Lydia converted & baptized	Acts 16:13–15	First believer in Europe
Philippian jailer saved	Acts 16:25–34	Key member of the early church
Paul revisits Philippi	Acts 20:1–6	Strengthens believers
Paul appeals to Caesar	Acts 25–26	Leads to Roman imprisonment

BIBLICAL JOY VS. HAPPINESS

CONCEPT	Joy	Happiness
Source	Rooted in God's presence, promises, and character	Often based on external circumstances or emotional highs
Stability	Steady and enduring—even in trials	Fleeting and changeable—depends on what's happening
Biblical Language	"Joy" and "rejoice" are used over 300 times in Scripture	"Happiness" is rarely used and not emphasized
Example	Paul rejoices while imprisoned (Philippians 4:4)	Happiness might come from comfort or success
Focus	Spiritual strength and eternal hope	Emotional response to favorable conditions

EMOTION	Joy	Happiness
Depth	Deep, enduring, rooted in faith	Surface-level, often fleeting
Source	Comes from God, even in trials (James 1:2)	Comes from favorable circumstances
Stability	Can coexist with sorrow (2 Corinthians 6:10)	Disappears in hardship
Spiritual Role	Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22)	Not emphasized in Scripture