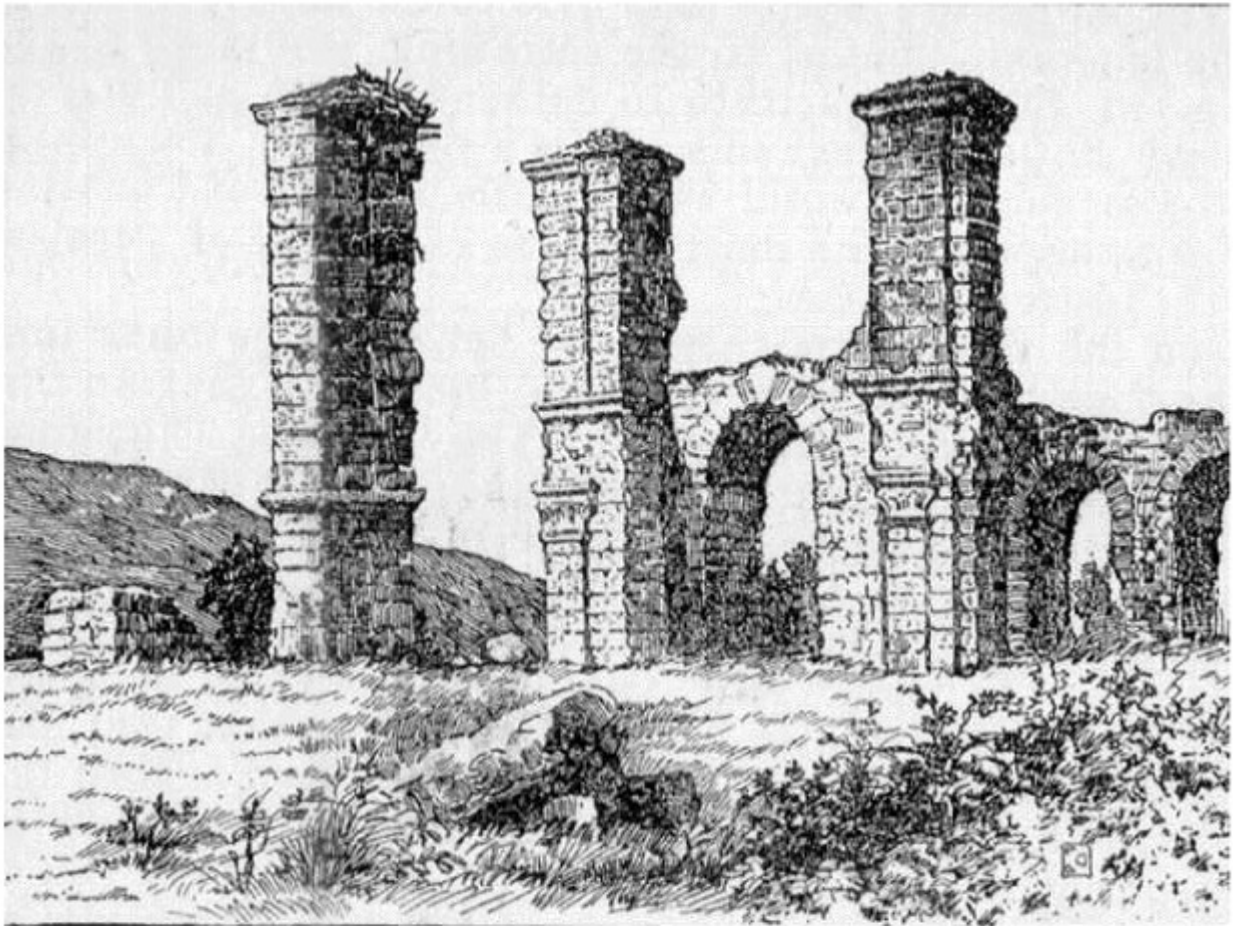


Philippians

Plea for Like-mindedness



Adult Workbook – Fourth Quarter 2020

The Forum Terrace Church of Christ in Grand Prairie, Texas

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Introduction to Philippians

Philippians 1:1-2

1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul the Author

The authorship of Philippians has never been in doubt until the last few centuries. Early Christian writer, such as Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Irenaeus and Polycarp of Smyrna all quote from this letter and attribute it to Paul.

The internal evidence precisely coincides with what Paul would have written. The language and style of the letter points to Paul as the writer. The letter is very personal and is filled with autobiographical information. It mentions that Paul was in prison when it was written (1:7,13,17). The writer of this letter was facing either death or acquittal (1:25; 2:24). He named friends and co-workers. The author mentioned the his affection and gratitude to the Philippians. The letter reads like a personal conversation between old friends. Timothy was with him (1:1; 2:19-23). In addition to all this, Paul makes reference to *“the whole palace guard”* (1:13) and *“Caesar’s household”* (4:22).

Timothy is named with Paul in the salutations of five other epistles as he is here in Philippians. Because Timothy was mentioned in the first verse with Paul some have come to the conclusion that the were co-authors. However over fifty times Paul uses the personal pronouns such as *“I”*, *“me”*, or *“my.”* This indicates that he alone was the author.

Place and Date of Writing

The dating of the letter to the Philippians is connected to the place of the writing. Determine the place where Paul was being held as a prisoner and one will be able to more concisely pinpoint a date. The most commonly accepted place for the writing of the letter was Paul’s first imprisonment at Rome. Others argue that Paul was imprisoned at other times and places, therefore the time and location may have not been Rome. Paul told the Corinthians that he has been in prison often (2 Cor. 11:23). Clement of Rome says gives seven as the number of times Paul was in jail.

- **Ephesus**

The main issue with Rome is the distance of 1200 miles between Rome and Philippi. In his letter to the Philippians Paul alludes to several trips. “One journey is necessary for whoever brought the Philippians the news of Paul’s imprisonment, a second for Epaphroditus as he brought their gift to Paul (2:25), a third for the news of Epaphroditus’s illness to get to Philippi, and a fourth for the concern of the Philippians to have been reported to the sufferer (2:26). Paul envisages three more journeys, apparently all to be accomplished in the near future: Those of Timothy to Philippi and back with news (2:19) and that of Epaphroditus(2:25) Philippi is a long way form Roman (about 1,200 miles)” (Carson 319). Ephesus, on the other hand, was only about one hundred miles from Philippi.

Moises Silva explains the distance between Philippi and Paul was not as great of an issue as some agree. The letter indicates “...three journeys into a period of four to six months. But even if we

allow a very generous two months for each of these journeys, far less than a year is necessary to account for them. (Philippians, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary [Chicago: Moody, 1988].

Although the book of Acts mentions Paul being in prison at Caesarea, Rome, and Philippi, Luke says nothing about Ephesus. Paul's letter told the elders at Ephesus, "*remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears*" (Acts 20:31). Paul indicates his work at Ephesus was continuous with an interruption due to spending time in jail.

The only thing to support Ephesus as the place of Paul's writing is conjecture. However, if Paul did write from Ephesus the date of the letter would be sometime between 54 and 47 AD.

- **Corinth**

Others suggest Corinth as the location. Paul did deal with opposition in Corinth and he later reminded the Corinthians he had been in prison often. However, God sent encouragement directly to Paul while he was at Corinth. God told him "*for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city*" (Acts 18:10). About AD 50 would be the date for the letter if written from Corinth.

- **Caesarea**

Caesarea might be the best alternative to Rome (Acts 23:35). Paul was imprisoned there for about two years. However the distance from Caesarea to Philippi is not that much of a difference than the distance between Philippi and Rome. Even though Luke mentions that Philip the Evangelist had been working in Caesarea for many years and even years after Paul's imprisonment there, Paul makes no mention of him. In Paul's letter to the Philippians he is facing the possibility of death (Phil. 1:20; 2:17). Yet at Caesarea he was known to be a Roman citizen and had used his right to appeal to Caesar.

If Caesarea is the location from where Paul wrote to the Philippians then the date would be sometime between AD 58-60.

- **Rome**

Paul had written other letters to churches from prison: Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. These are commonly referred to as the "prison epistles." Most scholars and traditions dating back to the second century believe Paul wrote these during his first imprisonment at Rome.

Paul's house arrest at Rome is recorded in Acts 28. There is a great deal of similarity between Luke's account in Acts and Paul's statements in Philippians. In Acts Paul had Roman soldiers guarding him (Acts 28:16). Paul mentions them in Philippians 1:12-14. While in prison he was free to preach the Gospel (Acts 28:31) and to receive visitors (Acts 28:30). Paul says the same in his letter (Phil. 1:12-14; 4:18). He even received gifts and letters from others while in prison at Rome (Acts 28:17,30). The Philippian letter indicates the same.

For the purpose of this study it will be assumed (based on the evidence) that Paul wrote this letter to the church at Philippi while he was in his second year of imprisonment at Rome. He was awaiting the outcome of his appeal to Caesar Nero. Therefore the date of his letter is between 60 and 62 AD.

Philippi the City

The ancient city of Philippi was located in Eastern Macedonia. It was located on a plain with mountains all around, such as, Mount Pangaeum and Mount Orbelos. On the west was the Strymon River and the Nestos River was on the east. Eight miles from Philippi was the Aegean Sea and ten miles away was the seaport city of Neapolis known as Kavalia today. This area was first inhabited by those seeking gold in the hills around the fertile plain.

Modern archeology has exposed the buildings and layout of the city of Philippi. The city was divided by the Egnatian way. It was the great Roman highway which linked the west with the east. A football field size agora or forum (marketplace) dominated the inner city which had a city prison located close by. Located in the upper city were many pagan temples. An arch was located a mile west of the city on the Egnatian Way near the Gangites River. These arches were often used to mark the city limits.

The ancient site of Philippi was at first occupied by the small mining and farming village of

Krenides, meaning “the little fountains.” In 358 BC the father of Alexander the Great, Philip II of Macedon, recognized the strategic importance of this location built a strongly fortified city. He named it after himself. He also drained the surrounding marshes and built a network of roads.

During the Roman period Philippi was the location of the battle between the forces of Brutus and Cassius and those of the victorious Octavian and Antony in 43 BC. After Octavian defeated Anthony and Cleopatra at Actium in 31 BC, he was declared emperor. This ended the Roman Republic and began the Roman Empire. Emperor Octavian became “*Caesar Augustus*” (Luke 2:1). He rebuilt Philippi as a military city and a Roman Colony. He populated it with the soldiers who had been loyal to Antony. His loyal soldiers would claim the lands in Italy of these displaced Romans.

Like Antioch of Pisidia, Tarsus, Lystra, Troas, etc. Philippi was greatly benefitted as a Roman Colony. Although Philippi was occupied by Macedonian Greeks and some Jews, it was populated by Romans who were intensely loyal to Rome. Philippi was thus governed by Roman law, used Roman coins, dressed like Romans, and thus became a miniature Rome though far from Italy. The citizens of Philippi would have enjoyed exemption from certain taxes, the right to hold and transfer land, have their names recorded in a book of citizenship, spared scourging and crucifixion, etc. Women were privileged in these colonies in that they had more respect in civic and business dealings.

Philippian Church

Acts chapter sixteen tells of the establishment of the church at Philippi by the apostle Paul and others. In Acts 15:40, Paul and Silas began their second missionary journey from Antioch of Syria. After going throughout Phrygia and Galatia, they wanted to go to Asia, but the Holy Spirit forbade them (16:6). Next, they traveled to Mysia, intending to preach in Bithynia “*but the Spirit suffered them not*” (16:7). From thence, they came to Troas where Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia crying, “*Come over into Macedonia, and help us*” (16:9).

Although Paul had been forbidden to preach in Asia, ironically his first converts in Philippi were Asiatics: Lydia and her household (Acts 16:14,15). Upon arriving in the Roman colony of Philippi Paul and Silas quickly found Lydia by the river praying with a group of women. After the conversion of Lydia and her household. Paul and his group resided with her and continued to work in Philippi. While preaching in the city a slave girl who was possessed by a demon began to follow them around. Paul did not need the testimony from demons, so he cast the demon out of her (Acts 16:17,18). This resulted in a conflict with her owners who made much money through her soothsaying. Without the evil spirit, their “*hope of profit was gone*” (Acts 16:19). They did not care about the welfare of girl. They did not care about right and wrong. What they cared about was the money she was bring them.

The masters of the girl took Paul and Silas to the magistrates in the marketplace, accusing them of teaching customs that were not lawful for Romans. “*These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.*” (Acts 16:20-21). Since Paul was a Roman citizen the failure to give them a proper trial was illegal. They were given no fair trial. There was no opportunity for a defense. Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned on a false charge (16:22-24).

Being cast in the inner prison and in stocks they began to sing and pray. An earthquake at midnight frees all the prisoners. They stop the jailor from committing suicide and offer him and his family the Gospel instead. The next day Paul claims Roman citizenship and demands the magistrates to come down and release them. “*...they came and pleaded with them and brought them out, and asked them to depart from the city. So they went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed*” (16:39-40). From the “*we*” sections which begin at Acts 16:11-12 it appears Luke, the writer of Acts, must have stayed behind while Paul, Silas, and Timothy left toward Thessalonica.

With Lydia and her household and the Jailor with his, and perhaps the slave girl the church at Philippi has begun. Later the church would also consist of Epaphroditus, Euodia, Syntyche and Clement.

It was about AD 52. Later Silas visited Philippi (Acts 18:5). Paul himself revisited the city upon at least two occasions (2 Cor. 2:13; Acts 20:6).

Purpose of the Letter

The purpose behind a book of the Bible is important in helping to understand the contents. Paul wrote this letter to the Philippians while in prison. It is written out of a deep sense of gratitude and an close long term friendly relationship. He gives several reasons for writing as the letter unfolds.

First, Paul assures the brethren at Philippi of his current situation. Although he is in prison, he is still able to advance the Gospel message (1:12). And even if he is to die, he has not lost but gained. If he lives, he will continue to be of service to God and to them(1:20-24)

Next, Paul uses this letter to explain why he is returning Epaphroditus (2:25-30) and plans to send to them Timothy (2:19-24). Epaphroditus became very ill and perhaps close to death. Yet he fulfilled his mission to care for the needs of Paul on behalf of the brethren at Philippi. He planned to send Timothy to care for them, especially when he found out news about his appeal to Caesar.

Nearly twenty times the Greek words for “rejoice” or “joy.” are found in the letter of Philippians. This has led some to claim “joy” to be the theme of this letter. Paul was in prison awaiting an answer that could bring death. However, regardless of circumstances he was going to rejoice and they should emulate his attitude in their day to day lives (2:18; 3:1: 4:4).

Paul wanted to write to the church at Philippi to encourage them to practice unity (1:27; 2:2-4; 4:2).

Some of them had become divided over their own self-interest to the exclusion of the well-being and needs of others (2:3-4). The complaining hindered their fellowship (4:2). Furthermore, notice how often Paul used the terms “*same*” and “*one*” to encourage unity.

Paul was also very concerned about the false teachers who were a constant threat to the New Testament church. He called them “*brothers*” (1:14-17) and later “*dogs*” (3:2). Whether they were threats from outside the church in the form of Jews from places like Thessalonica or whether they be Judaizing teachers inside the congregation demanding Christians to keep the Law is of little difference. The spiritual safety of the congregation demanded vigilance.

No other church seems to be associated with the financial and material care of Paul’s missionary work like the church at Philippi. Paul was very thankful for their support (1:35; 2:24; 4:14-18). This letter was definitely written to express Paul thankfulness for their generous gifts of fellowship in the ministry.

Servants

Paul begins his letter to the Philippians by referring to himself and Timothy as “*bondservants*.” This was a common self-description given by Paul and others in their letters (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:1 James 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1 Jude 1:1). Notice Paul does not introduce himself as “Paul the apostle.” He was so well known to them that his apostleship did not need to be noted.

The term “servant” is from the Greek *douloi* which literally means “slave.” The Roman Empire was filled with slaves. Some were made slaves through conquest, others because of debts, and some were born slaves. They could earn their freedom, buy it, or someone could pay the price of redemption for them.

All Christians are slaves. They once were slaves to sin. Now they have been “*bought with a price*” (1 Cor. 6:20). No one could every earn or buy their freedom from sin. Christ came to die and become our Redeemer. Now those who have been redeemed from the slavery of sin are in bondage to Christ out of love and gratitude. The Old Testament Law spoke of those servants who desired to remain slaves to their masters by choice. “*But if the servant plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever*” (Ex. 21:5-6). Also part of the Law of Moses in Leviticus 25 every fifty years in the year of Jubilee, those who had become slaves because of debt were automatically set free.

Timothy who was a co-founder with Paul is mentioned as a fellow-servant in Christ with Paul. He was also Paul's "son in the faith" (1 Cor. 4:17) and his trusted emissary to the Philippians and other churches (2:19).

Saints

All Members

Paul wrote this letter to those who were saints. Although it seems clear from the context and the whole Bible that this would refer to all the members who made up the church at Philippi, the Roman Catholic church uses term "saint" differently. According to Catholic tradition a saint is someone who has been awarded sainthood after they have died.

The procedure for sainthood is quite involved. According to the Holy See Press Office at Vatican City on September 12, 1997 the canonical procedure for sainthood involves several steps. First, five years must have passed since the death of the candidate for sainthood. Next, the Bishop of the prospect's diocese must begin the investigation. Then a Diocesan Tribunal calls for witnesses to give examples. The candidate at this point is given the title of "Servant of God." Once the investigation is completed, all documents are passed on to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Nine theologians vote and pass the results on to the Pope. He drafts a decree. Next, comes Beatification requiring the verification of a miracle by the candidate. If the Pope decides in favor of the miracle the Beatification confers the title of "Blessed" upon the would be saint. An additional miracle is need for Canonization. Once verified the same way as the first miracle, the Pope through his pontifical infallibility gives the title of Saint to the candidate.

The words "saint" and "saints" appear nearly sixty times in New Testament. Most of the time it refers to men and women who are still alive. The term "saint" is derived from the Greek word *hagios* which means "set apart for God, to be as it were, exclusively his" (Thayer). The word "saint" is never used as a title to describe an individual. It refers to all those who have been saved or sanctified by God. Paul wrote "to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2). They were "saints by calling" a reference to their call to salvation. The word "saint" does not refer to personal holiness. He is a saint because he has been set apart by God. "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth" (John 17:19). Surely this does not mean that Jesus made Himself more holy. Holiness is the result of being set apart by God. There is no evidence in the New Testament of any individual Christian being awarded "sainthood" above his or her brethren.

These Christians were saints "in Christ Jesus." Only Christians make the claim of being in Christ. No one speaks of being "in Buddha" or "in Mohammed." Paul uses "in Christ" nearly thirty times and "in the Lord" forty-five times in his letters. "In Christ Jesus" is found over 150 times. Christians claim Jesus be to their Lord. Jesus Christ alone possesses power and authority over the lives of his holy ones or saints.

- **Bishops**

The Greek word *episkopos* is translated into two English words: overseer and bishop. The word "overseer" is of Anglo-Saxon origin meaning "over" to be above in rank and authority and "seer" which means to look upon or inspect. The word "bishop" is of Latin origin and is a corruption of a Greek word. It means the same as overseer.

Paul uses the terms interchangeably when he tells Titus to "appoint **elders** in every city" (Tit. 1:5). Then in verse 7 he instructs him: "For a **bishop** must be blameless". Further evidence comes from the apostle Peter. He exhorts "the **elders** among you" (1 Pet. 5:1) to "feed the flock of God which is among you serving as **overseers**" (v. 2). The word "feed" once again is the verb form of "poimen" which is a shepherd or pastor. Peter then uses the three Greek terms to refer to the same office.

Biblically speaking, the terms *elder*, *presbyter*, *overseer*, *bishop*, *pastor* and *shepherd* all refer to the same office in the organization of the early church. Every congregation in the New Testament times

that had these men appointed to the leadership would have a plurality of elders, overseers or pastors. Any man claiming to be an elder, presbyter, overseer, bishop, pastor or shepherd must first meet the qualifications found in 1 Tim. 3:1f and Tit. 1:5. there would have to be a plurality of men equally serving the congregation as pastors having all met the same qualifications.

Overseers are commanded with “*exercising oversight*” over the flock or congregation with is among them (1 Peter 5:2). Thayer says, they are tasked with “seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly” (Thayer 243).

The terms are plural. Never one bishop over one local church, but always a plurality of elders.

- **Deacons**

The only other place where “bishops and deacons are found is in 1 Timothy chapter three where Paul gives their qualifications. Goodspeed’s translation called them “Superintendents and assistants.” The translators of the New King James Version took the Greek word *diaconos* and transliterated it to produce the English term “deacon.” Elsewhere, in the New Testament this term is translated “servant” or “minister.” It can be used in a general sense referring to all Christians as servants of God (Jn. 12:26) or in a specific sense such as in this passage where qualified men serve the church in a leadership role. They are selected because they have met specific qualifications and are appointed to render a service in their office as a deacon. Deacons who hold an office in the organization of a local congregation are mentioned along side overseers in the church at Philippi (Phil. 1:1).

Perhaps the first mention of men who were selected based on qualifications to serve a congregation as deacons would is found in Acts 6:1-6. Although these seven men are never called deacons, two Greek words associated with *diaconos* are used *diaknein* meaning “to serve” and *diaknoiai* being “service.” are used. These seven men represent the type of men and sort of work deacons are to fulfill. The Hellenist widows in the early church at Jerusalem were being neglected. The apostle ask that seven men who were qualified be appointed to serve the needs of these widows.

Notice that wherever deacons are mentioned as specific qualified servants in a congregation they are always male.

Salutation

Paul’s greeting or salutation to the Philippians is the same as is found in many of his letters: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians and Philemon. Archaeologists have found thousands of Greek papyri which support this style of greeting. They include the sender’s name, the name of the person or persons to whom the letter is sent, and the greeting.

However there is one clear distinction which sets greetings in the New Testament apart from others secular letters of the day. Making a play on words Paul does not use the Greek word *charein* meaning “greeting” but instead uses the Greek term *charis* meaning “*grace*”. Thus Paul speaks of the mutual unmerited favor he and those at Philippi share in Christ.

Paul couples “grace” with the Jewish greeting “peace”. Peace refers to the desire to wish “well-being, good health and tranquility to the recipients of the letter. It is interesting to note that the first thing Jesus said to his disciples after His resurrection was “*Peace be with you*” (John 20;19). Also note that “grace” always comes before “peace”. It is only when we are first reconciled to God by the unmerited favor of salvation does one have peace with God.

Paul says “grace” and “peace” are in relation to God and Jesus Christ. The term for “*father*” is *abba*. “It was the common household word used by young Jewish children in addressing their fathers. This homely word would never be used by Jews to address god, but Jesus, when he prayed to God, regularly used it.” (Walton 8). Jesus and God are the co-source of grace and peace. This puts them on an equal basis.

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Questions:

1. What is the internal evidence that Paul is the author of Philippians?
 - a) language and style
 - b) Autobiographical information
 - c) writings of early Christian writers
 - d) both a) and b)
2. True False Timothy co-authored his letter to the saints at Philippi.
3. Paul wrote this letter while in prison at:
 - a) Ephesus
 - b) Corinth
 - c) Caesarea
 - d) Rome
4. The accepted date of the letter for this workbook is:
 - a) between 54 and 47 AD
 - b) 50 AD
 - c) 58-60 AD
 - d) 60-62 AD
5. List the things found in the city of ancient Philippi by archeologist which correspond to the New Testament.
6. Philippi was a Roman colony. What benefits would this afford its citizens?
7. List the known members of the church at Philippi according to the New Testament.

8. List the various reasons behind Paul's need to write this letter?

9. What are "bondservants"?

10. What is a New Testament "saint"? Contrast this with a Roman Catholic saint?

11. Who are the Bishops?

12. Who are the deacons?

13. What makes Paul's greetings unique?

14. Define "grace".

15. Define "peace".

16. Who are the sources of this grace and peace?

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Philippians 1:3-11

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, 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; 7 just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. 8 For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Questions:

1. How often does Paul pray for the Philippians?
2. With what emotion does he pray for them?
3. What does it mean to have "*fellowship in the gospel*"?
4. Who began a work in them and when will it be completed?
5. What justifies Paul's right to have this confidence in them?
6. What is Paul's current status?
7. What do the Philippians partake of with Paul? What does this imply?

8. What is God a witness to concerning Paul?
9. In what ways did Paul pray that their love abound?
10. How could they approve the things that are excellent?
11. What are the "*fruits of righteousness*"?
12. What result would their conduct in these things have for God?

Application & Discussion:

1. Twice in these verses Paul mentions "*the day of Christ Jesus*" and "*the day of Christ.*" To what is this in reference? Where else in this letter does Paul make reference to this day?
2. How do Christians obtain knowledge and discernment? How does this help us to love and live a righteous life?

Homework: Pray often in thanksgiving for and in hope of the spiritual well-being of your fellow Christians.

Prisoner Preaching Christ

Philippians 1:12-20

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, 13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; 14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. 15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: 16 The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; 17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice. 19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

Questions:

1. What has happened to Paul?
2. What has become evident and to whom?
3. What result have they had on evangelism? Why?
4. Who are the two contrasting groups who are sharing the Gospel?
5. What are the motives for the first group?
6. What are the motives of the second group?

7. How does Paul react to the preaching done by the first group?
8. What two factors gave Paul the confidence that in the end he will have deliverance?
9. Of what would Paul not be ashamed? Why?
10. In what two ways will Christ be magnified in Paul's body?

Application & Discussion:

1. What fears do Christians have which can hinder them from sharing the Gospel? What can they do about these fears?
2. What are some other unhealthy motives for sharing the Good News with others? How do negative motives of the teacher of the Good News affect the new convert?
3. How does one share the Gospel out of love?

Homework: Remember to keep on sharing the Gospel with others regardless of your situation, but try to do it in love.

Prepared to Live or to Die

Philippians 1:21-30

21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. 25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, 26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again. 27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.

Questions:

1. What does Paul see as a gain?
2. What benefits does Paul receive from continuing to live?
3. For Paul which is better: to live or to die?
4. Which is better for the Philippians: Paul to live or for him to die?
5. Of what is Paul confident?
6. What will bring the Philippians abundant joy?
7. What were the saints at Philippi to continue to do whether Paul came or did not?

8. What did Paul want to hear about them?

9. How were they to respond to their adversaries? What were the two contrasting views of the conflict between them and their adversaries?

10. What two things have been "*granted on behalf of Christ*" to them?

11. What did the Philippians see and hear concerning Paul?

Application & Discussion:

1. What is so much better about dying in the eyes of a faithful Christian?

2. According to the passage under consideration what is the purpose of a Christian's life?

Homework: Live every day so as to reflect the glory of the Good News in your life. All the while looking forward to the day you die to be with Christ.

Preeminent Mind of Christ

Philippians 2:1-11

Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Questions:

Matching:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. _____ Consolation | a. and mercy |
| 2. _____ Fellowship | b. of love |
| 3. _____ Comfort | c. in Christ |
| 4. _____ Affection | d. of the Spirit |
5. What would fulfill Paul's joy?
6. What two negative motives does Paul warn them against?
7. How should the saints at Philippi esteem each other?
8. Whose interests should they look out for?

9. How great is Christ Jesus?

10. How did He make Himself of no reputation?

11. To what extent did Christ become humble and obedient?

12. To what extent did God glorify Christ?

13. What is the result upon those in heaven and on earth of Christ being glorified?

Application & Discussion:

1. What was involved in having unity among the saints at Philippi?

2. How could Jesus be in the likeness of man and still be equal with God?

Homework: Have the mind of Christ when dealing with fellow saints and obeying God.

Participating in Salvation

Philippians 2:12-18

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you 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 who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. 14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. 17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

Questions:

1. To what does the word "*therefore*" refer?
2. What does "*beloved*" mean?
3. What shows the Philippians' obedience to be sincere?
4. What were they to do "*with fear and trembling*"?
5. What is God's "*good pleasure*"? How does He accomplish it?
6. What benefits are there for the Christian to "*do all things without complaining and disputing*"?

7. How is their generation described? Could this be said of our generation? Explain.
8. What role did the saints at Philippi play in their generation? How?
9. What would cause Paul to *"rejoice in the day of Christ"*?
10. How is Paul being *"poured out as a drink offering"*?
11. Why should the Philippians *"be glad and rejoice"* with Paul?

Application & Discussion:

1. What is our part in working out our salvation and what is God's part?
2. What things would cause you to have joy at the Second Coming of Christ?

Homework: God has His part in our soul's salvation and you have your part. Be sure to get to work doing your part.

Paul's Co-Workers

Philippians 2:19-30

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. 20 For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. 22 But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. 23 Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. 24 But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. 25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; 26 since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. 29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; 30 because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

Questions:

1. Who was Paul sending to Philippi? Give some background information about him?
2. What would encourage Paul?
3. How does Paul describe Timothy?
4. Is the word "all" as used in verse twenty-one inclusive of every living soul? Explain.
5. What was evident to the Philippians about Timothy's character?
6. When did Paul hope to send Timothy?

7. What terms does Paul use to describe Epaphroditus?
8. What affect did the Philippians knowledge of Epaphroditus' sickness have upon him?
9. How sick was he and how did he recover?
10. What would have given Paul "*sorrow upon sorrow*"?
11. What would cause Paul less sorrow?
12. Who should the saints of Philippi receive Epaphroditus and why?

Application & Discussion:

1. How can fellow Christians today become as like-minded as Timothy was with Paul?
2. What characteristics are found in Epaphroditus that we should emulate?

Homework: Work on being a Timothy and an Epaphroditus to the saints.

Proud Persecuting Pharisee

Philippians 3:1-6

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, 4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Questions:

1. Does the term "*finally*" mean "in conclusion" in verse one? Explain.
2. Why was Paul's writing to them not tedious?
3. Of whom were they to beware?
4. What does "*dogs*" refer to in this context?
5. What does "*mutilation*" mean in this context?
6. Why could Paul and the Philippians saints (who were mostly gentiles) claim to be the circumcision?
7. What is opposite of having "*confidence in the flesh*"?

Matching:

- | | | | |
|-----|---|----|------------------------|
| 8. | _____ a Hebrew | a. | a Pharisee |
| 9. | _____ circumcised | b. | persecuting the church |
| 10. | _____ tribe | c. | blameless |
| 11. | _____ concerning zeal | d. | eighth day |
| 12. | _____ concerning the righteousness in the Law | e. | Benjamin |
| 13. | _____ concerning righteousness | f. | of the Hebrews |

Application & Discussion:

1. Who were the false teachers that Paul was warning them about? What false doctrines were they spreading?

2. From other passages in the New Testament give details of Paul's religious pedigree?

Homework: When it comes to your salvation put your confidence in God not your past accomplishments.

Pressing on to the Goal

Philippians 3:7-14

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Questions:

1. What things were of gain to Paul?
2. How does he view these things now?
3. What has he gained?
4. What is rubbish to Paul?
5. Contrast the righteousness from the law with the righteousness from God?

6. What does Paul want to know?
7. How could Paul be "*conformed to His death*"?
8. Has Paul already attained "*the resurrection from the dead*"? Explain.
9. Of what is Paul laying hold?
10. What is Paul forgetting?
11. What is he pursuing?

Application & Discussion:

1. How does suffering relate to gaining Christ? What things have you counted as loss since becoming a Christian?
2. How does one pursue perfection in Christ?

Homework: Press on toward your goal of the resurrection.

Pursuing the Pattern

Philippians 3:15-4:1

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 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 set their mind on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. 1 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

Questions:

1. Who are the mature in this passage?
2. Are there different degrees of "attaining" among the saints?
3. What is the "same rule" or "same walk" which the Philippians are to pursue?
4. How are they to join Paul?
5. What are they to note concerning other saints?
6. How are "the enemies of the cross of Christ" described?

7. Where is our citizenship?
8. When will we go home?
9. What will happen to our bodies?
10. How is Christ able to transform us?
11. How does Paul describe the Philippians in chapter four and verse one?
12. What are they commanded to do?

Application & Discussion:

1. Explain our dual citizenship status as we live on earth and hope for Heaven. What are our laws, king, language, treasure, etc. in regard to our citizenship in heaven?
2. What does standing fast in the Lord involve? Search other passage of scripture for the answer.

Homework: Walking and live on earth everyday as a citizen of Heaven.

Prayer, Peace & Rejoicing

Philippians 4:2:9

2 I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life. 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. 9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Questions:

1. What do Eudonia and Syntyche need to do?
2. Who is called upon to help them?
3. What is the book of life?
4. Why is rejoicing to be "in the Lord" and "always"?
5. What does Paul mean when he says, "the Lord is at hand"?
6. How are we to counter being anxious?
7. How is the peace of God described? What will it do for the saint?

8. List some things that are true:

9. List some things that are noble:

10. List some things that are just:

11. List some things that are pure:

12. List some things that are lovely:

13. List some things that are of good report:

14. What are they to do? What will be the result?

Application & Discussion:

1. How is praying related to rejoicing and the peace of God?

2. What is mediation according to the Bible? What is involved in meditating?

Homework: Budget time in your daily schedule for praying, rejoicing and meditating.

Providing Gifts & Greetings

Philippians 4:10-23

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. 14 Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. 15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. 18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. 19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. 20 Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. 21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. 22 All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household. 23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Questions:

1. What caused Paul to rejoice greatly in the Lord?
2. Why did the church at Philippi have a lapse in their care for Paul prior to their recent assistance to him?
3. In what areas has Paul learned to be content?
4. How can Paul do all things?
5. What made the church at Philippi unique in Paul's eyes?

6. What did the church at Philippi do for Paul when he was at Thessalonica?
7. What is Paul seeking for the Philippians?
8. Who brought Paul their gifts and how did he view these gifts?
9. How can God supply all our needs?
10. Who sends greetings along with Paul to the church at Philippi?

Application & Discussion:

1. Using other passages explain the New Testament pattern of sending support to a preacher?
2. If you had to pick a single theme for Paul's letter to the Philippians would it be Joy, Unity or something else. Explain.

Homework: As you have opportunity care for the needs of the saints.

Progress Report on Philippians

Philippians 1:1 - 4:23

There will be a test on your understanding of Paul's letter to the Philippians.