



# PHILIPPIANS

**FOURTH**  
**STREAM**  
FINDING HOPE

## Welcome to the Book of Philippians!

To begin your study of Philippians, investigate the references listed in the overview chart below. Use these verses as guideposts to unlock the message of the book. As you observe this overview, decide how each section relates to the theme of Joy. We have chosen 3:1 as the key verse for Philippians which reflects the theme of the book, "Christ the Joy of our lives." Christ alone is to be the foremost person in the joy of our life, the clarity of joy in our mind, the consuming goal of our heart's passion, as well as the strength of a life lived for eternal purposes!

# PHILIPPIANS

# Christ's Joy

Christ our <b>LIFE</b>	Christ our <b>MIND</b>	Christ our <b>GOAL</b>	Christ our <b>STRENGTH</b>
1:6,21	2:5,12	3:1,14	4:12,13
1	2	3	4

*"Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord!" 3:1*

*Open Your Heart as You read!*

**Galatians** opened with a rebuke for falling prey to destructive heresies and closes with an appeal to walk in the renewal of the Holy Spirit. **Ephesians** discusses the specific calling of the Church in the world and defines Her conduct. **Philippians** focuses Christ as the object of the deep affection of our hearts.

Is Christ the common denominator among the valuable things in your life? How does one live a realistic life in this world and yet place Christ as Lord over our choices? What is the secret that Paul had learned? Is this a secret that you share? Understanding a life filled with joy is critical for a life of peace.

## **THE AUTHOR OF PHILIPPIANS**

Written by Paul from house arrest in Rome - to one of the churches he founded on his second missionary journey (Acts 16). He was awaiting his appeal to Ceasar.

## **DATE**

62-63 A.D.

## **OTHER HISTORY**

Acts 16:12-40 records Paul's visit to Philippi during his second missionary journey. According to Acts 16:12 Philippi was a Roman colony and leading city in Macedonia, so it would have had deep Roman roots. Evidently they had no synagogue because a group of women had met by the river for prayer. As Paul spoke, Lydia from the city of Thyatira, became his first convert. Paul also cast a demon out of a slave girl in the city. After being accused of disorderly conduct by the girl's owners, Paul and Silas were thrown into prison. As they sang songs of praise after midnight, an earthquake freed them and the city jailer and his family became followers of Christ and were baptized.

The Philippians have sent Epaphroditus to Paul while he was a prisoner at Rome. Paul sends him back and thanks them for their financial gift, taking the opportunity to correct some minor disorders they were having. But of high importance is that Paul is showing them that Jesus Christ is sufficient for any current problems they may be facing - as well as for all of life.

Most theologians consider joy the theme of this book since the word occurs 16 times in the letter. Paul is being very transparent about joy in the midst of his difficult circumstances. Philippians is completely centered on Jesus as the focus of our faith. In 1:3-30, Paul presents Christ as the center of life. In 2:1-30 he encourages us to follow His example. In 3:1-4:1 Paul reflects upon the prize of a follower's life: eternal existence! And in 4:2-23, we read about the sufficiency of Christ in meeting all of our needs.

## *Why Study the book of Philippians?*

We live in an age which stresses lifestyles of self sufficiency - even to the point of harmful isolation. While it is vital that we all carry our own load, the mental attitude of self sufficiency is inadequate and inappropriate for a Christ-follower. The book of Philippians proclaims that a believer is to find his/her sufficiency in Christ: "I can do all things THROUGH CHRIST who strengthens me (4:13)" not "I can do all things through an inwardly strong self that strengthens me." When we believe and live this truth we are moving forward on the road to maturity in Christ!

Questions	Chapter	Title	Verse
<p>What do you think it meant to Paul to participate in the Gospel? What is the reason for Paul's rejoicing? What is causing him conflict? In what ways had Christ become Paul's life?</p>	1		
<p>What is the significance of the drink offering of Paul? What would you consider Paul's thoughts on the most important attitude a disciple can evidence? How does someone work out our salvation with fear and trembling and why is this important? In what ways did Paul expect the Philippians to make Christ the focus of their minds?</p>	2		
<p>What is of surpassing value in this life? What is the standard being referred to in verse 16? What is the attitude mentioned in verse 15? In what ways had Christ become Paul's goal in life?</p>	3		
<p>What does Paul think is the key to living in the peace of God? What is to be the motivation for forgiveness? How could someone be another's joy and crown? Where did Paul's practical strength come from? What is one of major personal purposes for prayer?</p>	4		

**WHAT ABOUT TODAY?**

The book of Philippians is filled with practical and encouraging help in following Christ! What do you consider the great motivators in your life? How does Christ become our deepest motivation? In what ways is God's pleasure being fulfilled in your life? Does 4:8 reflect the goal and condition of your mind? Do verses 6,7 of chapter four reflect the reality of your prayer life?

God is deeply concerned about our everyday walk. The standards outlined in Philippians are high, but certainly not unattainable when coupled with confidence in His Word and reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

In America we feel we are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. As followers of Christ, the promise is not one of happiness per se, but holiness. A.W. Tozer once wrote, "The Christian is not called to be happy, but to be Holy." This in no way means life is to be absent enjoyment, but that our level of happiness would transcend to a higher spiritual level of joy and peace in the higher purposes of our lives.

To live a life consumed with earthly, temporary happiness is to miss the point of existence. To rejoice in God is to find a depth of hope that adds deeper meaning to our souls!

The following passages teach us about experiencing joy and actively rejoicing in God. Investigate each reference and note what the passage teaches you about having a practical, daily joy.

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Luke 15:1-7        | What causes joy for God?  |
| John 15:11         | What "things" had Jesus spoken that would give His disciples joy? |
| Romans 14:17       | What two kinds of joy are contrasted here?                        |
| Philippians 2:1-7  | What brought complete joy to Paul in those who followed him?      |
| James 1:2-4        | How could life bring you joy and not necessarily happiness?       |
| Psalms 126:5       | What was filling this Hebrew writer with joy and why?             |
| Matthew 5:12       | Why would this cause some to rejoice?                             |
| Romans 12:15       | How does one accomplish this (in practical terms)?                |
| Philippians 4:4    | How is this possible?   |
| Psalms 19:8        | What is a precept, and how does it "rejoice the heart"?           |
| 2 Corinthians 6:10 | How can someone accomplish both of these at the same time?        |

**In Conclusion:**

- |                 |                                 |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Galatians 5:22  | Fruit of the Spirit             |
| Proverbs 17:22  | A Merry Heart                   |
| Philippians 3:1 | Rejoice: I will write it again! |

Contemporary ideas of contentment carry with them a picture of well-being and satisfaction. These outcomes include a well-stocked reserve, the long awaited functional and comfortable environment, and a life untouched by severe calamity or disruptive turmoil. The contentment of a Christ-follower, however, is rooted in experiencing peace despite our circumstances rather than because of our circumstances. Our nature is to avoid pain and suffering. Such a picture of contentment works from the outside in, rather than the inside out. Let's investigate what the Scriptures define as true contentment, and try to learn what it means to achieve this experience of "great gain."

**The Secret of Contentment**

Philippians 4:10-19

What was the secret of Paul's contentment? What conditions would Paul place upon the attainment of contentment? What makes one able to claim the truth of 4:13 and 4:19?

**The Conditions that Produce Contentment**

From Philippians 4:1-9 notice the contextual conditions that facilitate contentment. List each condition, and in your own words define how that condition could produce contentment in a person's life.

*Condition for Contentment*

*How it contributes to contentment:*

vs. 1 Stand Firm	
vs. 2 Live in Harmony	
vs. 4 Rejoice	
vs. 5 Be Forbearing	
vs. 8 Guard Your Mind	
vs. 9 Imitate Paul's Example	

1 Timothy 6:6-10 (See also Hebrews 13:4,5)

What are the basics for being content?

What are the enemies of contentment?

2 Corinthians 12:10

How and why could anyone be content with this list of troubles?

## WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

What does each passage teach you about *singing songs to a troubled heart?* - Proverbs 25:20

About encouragement?

Deuteronomy 1:38; 3:28 (Joshua) \_\_\_\_\_

2 Samuel 11:25 (warriors) \_\_\_\_\_

Ezra 6:22 (enemies) \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 35 and 55 (God's people) \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 11:23 (resolute) \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 4:8 (saints) \_\_\_\_\_

1 Thessalonians 3:2; 5:11 (faith and one another) \_\_\_\_\_

Titus (family life) \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 3:13 (one another) \_\_\_\_\_

Daniel 11:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 4:36; 15:31 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 15:4,5 \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:1; 4:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 6:8 \_\_\_\_\_

## SON OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Here is the *Barnabas* thread from the God Story - enjoy!

Acts 4:36; 9:27; 11:22,30; 12:25; 13; 14:12-20; 15; Galatians 2:1,9,13

*How can I become a more encouraging person?*

*In what ways do I need and receive encouragement?*

*What are things that encourage?*