

“Introduction To The Book Of Philippians”

Philippians 1:1-18

Message by Michael J. Barnard

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Teaching Aim: To lay the foundation for our journey through the Book of Philippians. To realize some of the unique challenges Paul faced as he ministered to this Gentile church while under house arrest in Rome. To observe how Paul responded to times of adversity. To understand God can turn our difficult situations in life around for our good and His glory when we trust Him.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: Introduction to the Book of Philippians (Phil. 1:1-2)

1. Who was the city of Philippi named after? (See Commentaries) What, if any significance was there in this city being a Roman Colony? (**See Acts 16:12**) What was the first church Paul planted on the continent of Europe? Why did Paul go to Macedonia instead of Asia as he originally desired? (**See Acts 16:6-10**). Has God called you to a special mission in life? If so, what is it?

2. According to **Acts 16:13**, how large of a Jewish population did Philippi have? How do we know this? (See Commentaries) Why do you think Paul didn’t quote any Old Testament passages in the Book of Philippians?

3. What is the major doctrinal highlight of this book? (**See Phil. 2:5-11**) Philippians, along with the books of Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon are often called “*The Prison Epistles*.” In spite of the fact that Paul was under house arrest in Rome as he wrote this epistle, what theme do we find again and again in this book? (**See Phil. 1:18,26;2:17,18; 3:1; 4:4,10**) Do you find yourself filled with joy during times of difficulty?

Part II: Paul remembers and prays for the Philippians (Phil. 1:3-11)

1. The Book of Philippians begins with the words, “*Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ...*” Does this introduction indicate that Timothy co-authored the book with Paul or was there another reason that Paul mentioned him? (**See Acts 16:1-5**)

2. What does it mean when someone is, “*a bondservant?*” Do you consider yourself to be “*a bondservant of Jesus Christ?*” If so, how has this affected your life? If not, what is keeping you from surrendering your life to Christ?

3. Philippians is the only one of Paul’s epistles directed to church officers in the introduction. What is another title for “*bishop*” that we use in our church today? (See Commentaries) What is the significance of the offices of elder and deacon in a church? (See **1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-9**) What are some ways that they differ?

4. How many times is the word “*pastor*” found in the Bible? (See Concordance) Who are the saints mentioned in **verse 1**? Are born-again Christians saints or only certain people designated so by the Roman Catholic church? What is the meaning of the word “*saint?*” (See Dictionary)

5. What was Paul’s response every time he thought of the brothers and sisters in Philippi (**vs. 3**)? Why? Paul had a great relationship with the Philippian believers, they worked well together with a common sense of purpose. According to **verse 3**, in what was their “*fellowship*” (*Gk “koinonia”*)? What did the church of Philippi do for Paul that no other church did? (See **Phil. 4:15**) Was their help strictly financial? (See **Phil. 2:25-30**)

6. Does it seem unusual to you that Paul would write about joyful memories when he thought back to the first day he was with the Philippians (**vv. 4-5**)? (See **Acts 16:16-34**) What remembrance brought Paul joy?

7. What was Paul confident of in **verse 6**? What did Paul mean when he wrote, “*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*”? What is meant by the phrase, “*the day of Jesus Christ*”? (See **1 Cor. 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Thess. 4:16-20**) Is “*the day of Jesus Christ*” different from “*the day of the LORD*”? If so, how? (See **Isa. 13:6,9; 34:8; Jer. 46:10**)

8. In what way were the Philippians still in Paul’s heart as he wrote this letter (**vs. 7**)? How were the Philippian believers’ partakers with Paul in his chains as he wrote this letter? Affection means a fond, tender feeling (**vs. 8**). Why is it so important for Christians to love and encourage each other with the affection of Christ today? (See **1 John 4:7-9; Matt. 22:37-40**)

9. Breakdown Paul’s prayer for the Philippians in **vv. 9-11** and explain how each aspect of that prayer should apply to our lives today. How can you turn this prayer into a personalized note of encouragement to another believer? When Christians are filled with the fruits of righteousness it will lead to the glory and praise of God. What kind of fruit should Christians produce (**vs. 11**)? (See **John 15:1-5, 9-12; Gal. 5:22-23; Jam. 3:16-18**) What will happen if the Christian tries to produce fruit on his or her own strength?

Part III: Paul’s chains in Christ actually work for the furtherance of the gospel (Phil. 1:12-18)

1. **Verse 12** finds Paul in prison waiting to be tried by Caesar. Paul is so single focused on his mission as an apostle of Jesus Christ that he can honestly say “*the things which happened to me actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel*”. (**vs. 12**). This includes the difficulties he went through. How do you respond when adversity comes to your own life? Do you find yourself looking to God for what He is doing in your life or do you find yourself grumbling about the difficulties you are going through? Share a difficult situation in your own life that God turned around for good. How did you grow spiritually through the experience?

2. Paul was likely chained to Roman guards 24-hours a day (**vs. 13**). Do you think Paul was treated like a common criminal or did he have special privilege? Why? What happened to many of the Roman guards as they got to know Paul better through his testimony and his defense of the gospel? Have you ever used your personal testimony to help reach others for Christ? If not, why not? Have you ever written out your testimony of coming to faith in Christ on paper? Why not do so now so you can use it in the future?

3. What happened to other Christians in Rome as they heard of Paul's testimony and the impact he was making while under house arrest (**vv. 13-14**)? (**See Acts 28:16,30**)? Have you ever been emboldened by the faith of others? How far did Paul's testimony reach according to **Phil. 4:22**?

4. As in any age of the church, some individuals were preaching with the right motive and others were not (**vs. 15**)? How were the self-seeking preachers of **verse 16** similar to some teachers today? Is this kind of minister helpful or harmful to the body of Christ? Do preachers with the wrong motive fulfill the prayer of Jesus for unity in **John 17:20-23**? Why is it important for Bible believing/Bible teaching churches to be unified today? Should we be uniting with churches that teach heresy? Why or why not?

5. According to **verse 17**, what is the motivation behind godly preachers? Why is this style of preaching more effective in bringing glory to God? (**See 1 John 4:8**)

6. Did Paul accuse the self-seeking preachers "*of preaching another gospel*" or of "*being false teachers*" (**vs. 18**)? What were they doing wrong? How did Paul respond to the added pain these misguided preachers brought to him?

7. Have you ever had another Christian hurt you deeply? How did you respond? How should you have responded? (See **Eph. 4:32**)

8. Can you rejoice at the victories of other local churches in ministry? Why do you think there is so much competition among churches today? Why is it important for Bible believing/Bible teaching churches to be unified today and not competing?

MINER'S CORNER – *Manna for today!*

- It is important for Christians to be thankful in all circumstances and to remember those whom you've served with in prayer.
- Every born-again Christian can be confident that God will complete the good work in him or her that He started (*salvation*) and preserve us until the day of Jesus Christ; that great day in which the true believer will receive eternal reward and blessing.
- A Christian's life filled with the fruits of righteousness (*doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord*) will bring glory and praise to God.
- Difficult circumstances are a golden opportunity for you to let your Christian light shine.
- It is important for Bible believing/Bible teaching churches to be unified with each other. (See **John 17:20-23**)