

Agape House of Worship
Midweek Service & Bible Study

Book Study: Epistle to Philippians
Text: Philippians 1

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2020
Facilitator: Pastor Jide Lawore

KEY FACTS FROM PHILIPPIANS

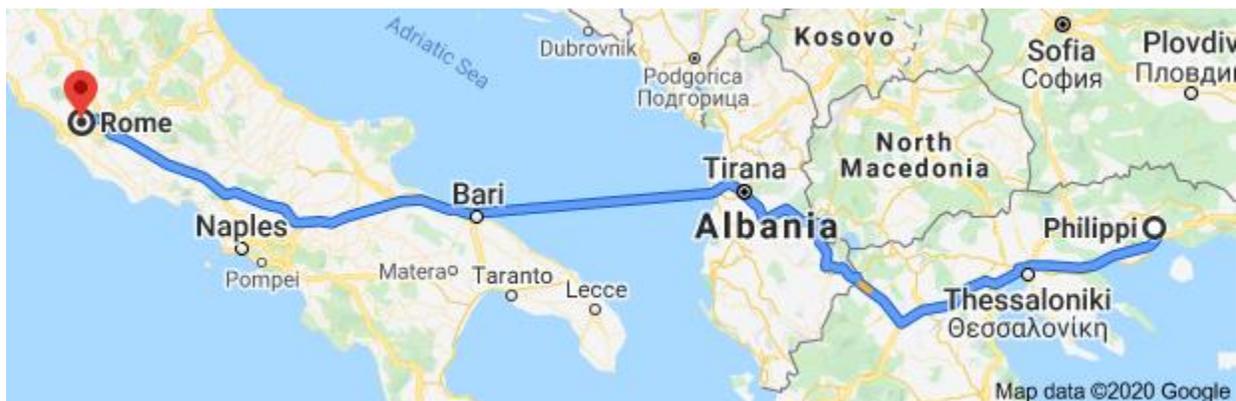
- About the Book: Philippians is one of the four Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon). Scholars agree that Paul drafted it during his two-year house arrest in Rome. Acts 28:1-31
- Author and Time: Paul wrote it about 62 A.D. as he anticipated his release from prison.
- Audience: The Philippian Church. Paul established the church in Philippi approximately ten years prior, during his second missionary journey recorded in Acts 16.
- Purpose: His purpose was to show his appreciation and love to the Philippians for their continued support, and to encourage their growth.
- Dominant Theme: Joy in the Christian life is all about perspective. True joy is not based on circumstances. The key to lasting joy is contentment found through a relationship with Jesus Christ. The words "joy" and "rejoice" are used 16 times in the Epistle.
- Key personalities: Apostle Paul, Timothy, Epaphroditus, Euodia, and Syntyche.

BACKGROUND:

The apostle Paul did not write Philippians in response to a crisis or to correct errors as he did with Galatians and Corinthians. Instead, he wrote to express his appreciation and affection for them for their care and support of his ministry. More than any other church, the believers in Philippi offered Paul material support for his ministry (2 Corinthians 8:11; Philippians 4:15–18).

Philippians 4:15-16 - "Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need."

This season was especially critical because Paul was under house arrest for two years, thankfully he was still able to preach the gospel without hindrance. However, he had to bear his own expense of rent and living expenses. The Philippi church sent one of its leaders on a 4,608 mile journey to bring Paul money and supplies.



Acts 28:30-31 – "For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. 31 He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!"

Philippians 4:18 – "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."

Epaphroditus ended up staying in Rome to assist Paul with ministry work and, at some point, during his stay became dangerously sick and nearly died (Philippians 2:26-27). After his recovery, Paul sent Epaphroditus back to Philippi, with this letter to the Philippian church. He also writes to assure them that despite his present imprisonment, the gospel is spreading (Phil. 1:12–18) and that he is well cared for (Phil. 4:18). Throughout the letter, Paul encouraged the church to live out their faith in joy and unity (Philippians 1:3–5, 25–26; 4:1).

BREAKDOWN OF PHILIPPIANS CHAPTER 1

Section 1 – Verses 1-11 - Apostle Paul Celebrates His Partnership in Ministry with the Philippians

Philippians 1:4-6 - "I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Is there anyone in your life that you thank God for each time you remembered them?

Section 2 – Verses 12-26 - Apostle Paul Helps the Philippians to Put His Suffering in Godly Perspective

Philippians 1:12-18 - "Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear. 15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice."

What does this passage teach us about Apostle Paul's attitude to the gospel?

How do you think this attitude can help us today as we serve in ministry?

Section 3 – Verses 27-30 – Apostle Paul Challenges them to Life Worthy of the Gospel

Philippians 1:27-30 – "Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel 28 without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. 29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, 30 since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have."

What does the phrase "Whatever happens" in verse 27 connote?

What does the phrase "to suffer for Christ" in verse 29 mean to you?