

# PHILIPPIANS



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## **You've Got This!**

### **How to Get the Most Out of This Study**

As you begin this Bible study, here are some tips to help you succeed:

- *Pray.* Ask God to help you learn His Word, love Him more and live to delight Him.
- *Daily habit.* Set aside time each day for your study. Create a routine. Set up a study space with all the supplies you need.
- *Pace.* Doing some each day allows time to think about what the Holy Spirit is teaching you. Don't wait until the last minute to start - spend time daily in the study and reading!
- *Personalize.* Choose the level of study that fits you and your lifestyle.
  - *New to Bible Study?* Reading the Bible daily is a WIN! Try to use the OIA method and attempt to answer a few questions. Don't be discouraged if you can't do it all.
  - *Experienced with Bible Study?* Read the passage daily using multiple translations, memorize the weekly verse, use the cross-references to dig deeper and spend more time on application. Meditate on the passage reflecting on how God is leading you to respond to His Word. Information (Bible knowledge) leads to transformation (meaningful life change)!
- *Attend each week.* It's easy to start something, it's more challenging to finish. Commit now to attend the teaching and circle discussion each week.
- *Participate.* Join in the conversation.
  - Come to group ready to talk about what you are learning even if it's only one thing. Share your Aha! moment.
  - Practice humility. If you are a Bible scholar, don't overwhelm the group with your brilliance - share what you are learning, not what you already know!
  - Do your part to keep the discussion focused on the study for the week.
- *Better together!* Make meaningful connections in the group as you spend time together pursuing God in His Word. Pray for and encourage one another!

## **Why Study the Bible?**

The Bible, unlike any other book ever written, comes directly from the breath of God (2 Tim. 3:16). It is a supernatural book. Though penned by men, it was given by the Spirit of God, to tell us about God, so that we may live as children of God. The Bible captures the story of humanity, our sinfulness and rebellion against our Creator, and God's great rescue plan to save us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

We read the Bible, not only because Jesus commands us to (John 8:31-32), but because by doing so, we gain a deeper knowledge of our heavenly Father. Often times we approach reading the Bible as a task to check off a list or to feel as though we've gained greater intellectual knowledge of biblical facts; yet, God has given humanity His literal word in order that His creation may know Him.

The 66 books of the Bible are intricately and purposefully written to reveal the nature and character of our Creator and how we, as Christians, are called to live in light of His truth. God's word is inerrant, without error or fault in all of its teaching (Pro. 30:5), and is sufficient in meeting all of our spiritual needs (Ps. 19:7-14) as it guides us in our walk with Christ. Through the lens of God's holy Word, we are able to see the world for what it is - sinful and in rebellion against Him - and the hope we have in Jesus Christ because of His sacrifice for us.

The Bible is not a self-help guide to better living and happiness. It is the transforming word of God, to His children, which brings hope, reveals His character and makes us more like His Son, Jesus.

As you approach your Scripture reading over the course of this study, ask the question "What does this passage reveal about God?" Then, ask yourself how the truth of who He is changes who you are and your view of self.

May God bless you richly through your study of His perfect word!

## 3-Step Bible Study

### *Observation, Interpretation, Application*

What do you think of when you hear “Bible Study”? Do you envision a small group sitting around discussing a Christian topic? Do you think of a large, heavy workbook with lots of fill-in-the-blank spaces? Or, do you think of a dark-paneled library full of theologians pouring over musty old texts with Gregorian chants playing in the background?

Don’t let the stereotypes confuse you. Bible study in its simplest form is you, a Bible, and a desire to know God. Add time and a method of study and you are on your way!

But how? Where do you begin and what is the most effective means of digging into God’s Word? While there are a variety of ways to approach Bible study, one of the most effective and frequently used is Observation, Interpretation and Application (OIA). It’s a one-size-fits-all formula for learning what the text is saying rather than reading a meaning into the passage. Anyone, from the person who is picking up the Bible for the first time to a seasoned student of Scripture, can use OIA to deepen his or her understanding of God through His Word.

Although it may seem counterintuitive, reading the Bible and studying the Bible are not the same thing. We read the Bible in various ways for a variety of reasons. We may read a verse in one book of Scripture and jump over to another passage in a different book. We may read to research a question or for the joy of being in God’s Word. But studying the Bible is more than reading; it is reading for comprehension and application.

When we study, we approach the Bible with a different mindset. We read the passage asking:

<b>What does it say?</b>	<i>This is <u>O</u>bservation.</i>
<b>What does it mean?</b>	<i>This is <u>I</u>nterpretation.</i>
<b>What will I do about it?</b>	<i>This is <u>A</u>pplication.</i>

These three questions are progressive phases of study. You must know what it says and what it means before you can apply the meaning in your life.

Let’s take a closer look at each piece of the OIA Method.

## OBSERVATION - What does it say?

As you read a passage of Scripture, ask yourself “**What does it say?**” This is the first step in discovering the meaning of the passage. Here are 3 ways of looking closely at the passage you want to study:

### Words, terms, and structure

Pay attention to the choice of words and terms and make sure you know what they mean! Look for words, phrases, or ideas that are repeated. Consider how the passage is written (grammatical structure), and observe what is communicated within the paragraph. Notice connector words (*therefore, but, and, like, so that, however, etc*) and how they influence the passage. Identify the literary form. Is it a letter, poetry or historical narrative? Poetry is read and understood differently than historical accounts. Does the passage contain cause and effect, “ifs” and “thens”, or comparisons and contrasts? You get the idea - pay attention to the details and consider how they shape the meaning of the passage.

### Themes and the big idea

Identify the themes you see in the passage as you study. Look for the the big idea, the central truth, or command that is being communicated.

Write your themes as a single word or short phrase. Identifying themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop an overall grasp of the passage.

### The Five Ws and H: Who? What? When? Why? Where? How?

Train your mind to ask questions as you read. Here are types of questions to ask. You don’t have to answer each question for every passage - these are just suggestions!

WHO is ...

... accomplishing the action?

... benefiting from the action?

WHAT is ...

...the meaning of this word/phrase?

...happening?

WHEN is...

...this taking place?

WHY did the author...

...choose this word/phrase?

...use this command?

...not say\_\_\_?

WHERE ...

...is this taking place?

...are they going?

HOW...

...was the action accomplished?

## **INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?**

If observation tells you what the text says, interpretation answers **“What does this mean?”**

Through observation and interpretation you are discovering what the author was conveying to his original audience. Here are some things to consider as you wrestle with the text’s meaning:

### **Context is key**

You will go a long way toward understanding what the passage meant to the original audience when you keep the context in mind. Look for how the passage connects to the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after. Follow the author’s flow of thought through the entire chapter or book.

### **Clarify with cross-references**

Look at cross-references (words or phrases that are used in other places in the Bible) to help you understand what the passage means. Most Bibles have cross-references in the margins or at the bottom of the page.

If your Bible does not, you can use [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com). Type in Philippians in the search box or click on “Bible Book List” and choose Philippians from the drop down menu. Make sure you have NIV selected as the Bible version. In the tool bar click the settings symbol (it’s between the printer symbol and the speaker symbol) and then click “Cross-References” in the dropdown menu. As you read the passage, you can use the cursor to hover over the superscripts - the cross-reference will appear on your screen. Additionally, you can see a list of all of the cross-references at the bottom of the page. This is a great tool for gaining insight to the meaning of words and for seeing how the Bible fits together.

### **Clarify with definitions**

Look up key words in an English dictionary. Don’t assume you know the meaning of a word. You may be surprised when you read the definition in the dictionary. Additionally, you can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary. You can use [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) to find an online dictionary. Choose Study from the tool bar, click More resources in the drop down menu and scroll down for dictionary options.

## **Delay the use of Commentaries and Study Bibles**

Reputable commentaries and study Bibles are helpful tools but should be used AFTER you have worked through the three steps of observation, interpretation and application on your own. It is much easier and quicker to turn to these resources but using them sidesteps deep learning. It is good to wrestle with the text; to take time to think through the passage; to meditate on the verses and to form your own conclusions before referring to other sources.

## **Principles to Keep in Mind**

It's often helpful to read the passage in several translations to get a better idea of what is being said. Recommended versions are NIV, ESV, NASB or NKJV. You can use the YouVersion app or go to an online resource (i.e. [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)) to see a passage in a variety of translations.

A word of caution on paraphrases like *The Message Bible*. Paraphrasing is someone writing the Bible in his own words. While a paraphrase can be interesting and even helpful, it should be used in *addition* to a Bible translation. A translation is the work of a team of scholars looking at the original languages, ancient cultures and ancient customs to make meaningful conversion to English.

Seek to understand what the passage meant to the original audience. There is one meaning to the text and that is what the original author was saying to the original audience.

Assume normal use of language. The Bible is not written in code language with hidden meanings.

Let Scripture interpret Scripture. God's Word is unchanging and does not contradict itself. When attempting to interpret a confusing passage, use other related passages of Scripture to guide you to the correct meaning of the passage.

## **Write a Summary Sentence**

The final step in interpretation is to combine all that you have learned to draw a conclusion about the passage's meaning. Your conclusion will fit the context of the passage, will agree with the general theme of the book and will not violate other biblical truth.

## **APPLICATION - What does it mean?**

Your Bible study is not over until you apply what you've learned to everyday life. Bible study is about information and transformation. God desires that you know the Word and do (obey) the Word (John 14:21, James 1:22). When you allow the Word of God to change how you think, how you live, and what you do, you are demonstrating your love for Him!



How do you apply a passage to your life? Application involves identifying principles in the passage and asking God to help bring your thoughts and actions in line with the principle. Having chosen a goal, write action steps to move in that direction.

### **List potential principles from your passage**

A principle is a fact or command, stated or implied, that is practical and relevant to life. Principles are timeless truths. In other words, they are not specific to a particular person or a particular time.

From this passage...

- Is there something I can thank God for?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a truth to believe?
- Is there a prayer to repeat?
- Is there something I need to change or begin doing?
- If I do what the passage says, what are the benefits?
- If I do not do what the passage says, what are the consequences?

### **Choose one principle to apply to your life**

After you list principles from the passage, pray asking God to give you wisdom to choose one to apply in your life. Once you have chosen a specific principle, answer these two questions:

1. What exactly will you do differently to apply this principle to your life?
2. Who will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

### **SMART Action Steps**

Action steps are most likely to happen when we make them SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound.

Example: Reading chapter 1 of Philippians, you identify the importance of praying for others. While saying "I will pray more for others" is good, it is best to be SMART: "I will pray for members of my small group, by name, each day (S: specific). I will pray in the mornings, 5 days a week using the prayer requests from our last meeting (M: measurable, A: attainable, R: realistic). I will begin tomorrow and will continue through May (T: time-bound)."

**notes...**

**notes...**

## **Introduction to Philippians**

### **THE CITY OF PHILIPPI**

The residents of the Macedonian (modern day Greece) city of Philippi during the time that the apostle Paul wrote the letter to the church there had great pride in their city. Philippi was located about ten miles inland from the Aegean Sea so it would have proximity to beautiful blue waters. Its name came from King Philip II who ruled in Macedonia from 359-336 BC.

This city gained notoriety when it became a Roman colony in 31 BC under the rule of the second Triumvirate which included Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus. After Lepidus was removed, Octavian and Antony faced off and led the Roman empire into a civil war. Octavian defeated Antony in the Battle of Philippi and so he raised the status of the city and bestowed many honors on its inhabitants including:

- Autonomous government
- Immunity from paying tribute
- Status that equaled that of those actually living in Italy

Perhaps Philippian civic pride came from these benefits as a leading city and the only Roman colony of its kind in the area. When reading Paul's admonition to Christ-like humility in his letter, remember the citizen's cultural bent toward boasting and pride.

### **THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH**

Paul had planned on traveling to Asia during his second missionary journey, but we read in Acts 16:6 that the Holy Spirit prevented him. He had a dream in which a man from Macedonia was beckoning him to come help him. This led Paul and his friend Silas to journey to Philippi. The Jewish population in Philippi was small and no synagogue was established there.

The missionaries found several women at a Jewish place of prayer near a riverbank outside the city. Can you envision these women meeting together to pray and encourage each other in worship based on their limited knowledge of God? Jewish women were not permitted the same educational opportunities as men. Paul shared the good news about Jesus, and the first recorded convert to Christianity in Philippi was a woman named Lydia. Perhaps you remember her as a business woman who sold purple cloth. She was a Gentile (non-Jew) who feared the Lord and had embraced the God of Israel. Through Paul's message she received greater revelation and placed her faith in Christ (Acts 16:13-15).

Philippi was also the place where a slave girl was released from demon oppression by Paul. Her masters were making a great deal of money because of her ability to tell fortunes. They started an uproar when Paul cost them their money-maker by freeing the girl of her demon, and Paul and Silas ended up in a Philippian jail (Acts 16:16-24) as a result.

While Paul and Silas were in this jail, an earthquake shook the ground around midnight as they were singing hymns and praising God. The jailer woke up to find the prison doors had opened and the prisoners had escaped. He drew his sword to take his own life. But Paul stopped him and shared the gospel with him. This man and his entire household were saved (Acts 16:25-34).

As you think about the Philippian church, the recipients that Paul penned this letter to encourage, you can imagine a group of people that likely included some religious Jewish women, a slave girl who was saved from demonic oppression, and a jailer and his family. To say this was a diverse slice of Philippian culture is likely an understatement.

### **AUTHOR, DATE, AND PLACE**

There is little dispute about Paul's authorship of the Philippian letter. While history doesn't record exactly when it was written, many scholars believe it was written from Rome. Paul was imprisoned there from AD 59-61 and this opinion is supported by Paul's references to the "palace guard" (1:13) and "Caesar's household" (4:22) in Philippians.

### **tone and circumstances**

Philippians' literary form is much like that of Paul's other letters. It begins by identifying the author and the recipients. Then it includes greetings followed by the body of the letter. More greetings provide the conclusion of the letter. What sets Philippians apart from its contemporaries is the personal tone of Paul's words. The joyful nature of the letter isn't interrupted with harsh correction or rebuke. The instruction of the letter is more cautionary and preventative. Another distinctive of the letter is the volume of references to Christ. Some form of Jesus' name or title is used 51 times in the 104 verses! As we move into the study of the book of Philippians, let's engage our hearts and our minds as we allow the living Word to lead us to greater intimacy with Jesus!

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\*\*\*All historical information taken from The Expositor's Bible Commentary. Frank E. Gaebelein general editor. Volume 11. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978. Pages 95-101

## **The Apostle Paul**

Saul, who was later to be called Paul, was born into a Jewish family in the city of Tarsus (located in modern day Turkey). Studying Jewish religious law under a man named Gamaliel, Saul became a strict and zealous Pharisee. Living in Jerusalem during the rise of the early church, Saul made it his mission to put an end to Christianity. After witnessing the stoning and death of a Christ follower, Stephen, Saul began the first great wave of persecution towards the early church, going to great lengths to eradicate anyone who believed in the Gospel (Acts 8).

While on his way to Damascus, intent on getting rid of any Christian influence in the synagogues there, Saul encountered a blinding light and the voice of Jesus calling out to him. Bewildered and unable to see, Saul was led by the hand to the town of Damascus where he met a Christ-follower, Ananias, who healed him. Because of Saul's encounter with Christ, he repented, converted to Christianity and was baptized in the name of Jesus. His name was changed to Paul.

After Paul's conversion, the same intensity he had for persecuting Christians transformed into a zeal and passion to spread the Gospel to the whole world. Driven by this desire and the calling on his life, Paul traveled throughout Asia Minor spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. He penned many letters of instruction and encouragement to the young churches. Those letters, or epistles, make up a great portion of the New Testament we read today.

**notes...**

## Week 1

# Unshakeable Joy in Christ

### Memory Verse

*"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"*

Philippians 4:4

Welcome to Unshakeable Joy, a study of the book of Philippians. Week 1 is an introduction to the study and an overview of Philippians. Following the teaching, read pages 2-11 of this workbook before moving on to Week 2.

**Use the space below to make notes during the teaching.**

Who wrote the book of Philippians?

What is the style (genre) of Philippians?

When and to whom was it written?

What are the main themes of Philippians?

**Notes...**

**Questions for circle discussion:**

What do you hope to gain during this 8-week study?

What has hindered your study of the Bible in the past?

What hesitations, if any, do you have about participating in group?



**notes...**

## Week 2

# Living For Christ

### Memory Verse

*"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."*

Philippians 1:21

In the beginning of this letter, Paul expressed his heart-felt love for the Philippians. He affectionately revealed that he thinks of them often, is concerned for their well-being and prays for them regularly. We learn that Paul and the Philippians enjoyed a close partnership centered on the good news of Jesus Christ! Together, they were sharing the hope of Christ and living gospel centered lives! This was true Christian community. In his letter, Paul shared the struggles he faced, including both internal and external pressure as he endured imprisonment and persecution. Even so, he rejoiced in his circumstances because the gospel was being preached! Paul's life is an example of the joy that is ours when we live for Christ.

### OBSERVATION - What does it say?

Begin your reading by talking to God. Thank God for the Bible and ask Him to guide your time of study.

Each week read the entire book of Philippians in one sitting. Later, perhaps the next day, read the passage assigned for the week and begin the OIA study.

### Read this week's passage: Philippians 1:1-30

Each time you read the Bible, ask yourself, "What does it say?" This is called *observation*. Throughout this study, you will learn a variety of observation skills to help you see what the Bible is saying. This week, simply read the passage and write observations in the space that follows.

Beginning on page 51 of this workbook, you will find a double-spaced copy of the book of Philippians. You may find it helpful to use markers or colored pencils to highlight your observations. Circle words, put boxes around words, underline, highlight, or write questions in the margin. This is your copy to mark up as you dig into God's Word! There are no rules here - it's free form! Don't worry if it gets messy - this should be fun so relax and enjoy!

As you read the first chapter of Philippians, what do you see? Are words or phrases repeated? Do you notice any themes or big ideas? Are people identified? What places or events are mentioned? Are there words that you should look up in a dictionary?

In the spaces below, write your observations. There are no “right” answers, it’s simply what you have observed as you have read. It’s ok to leave some things blank.

**My observations:**

Themes or big ideas:

Repeated words or phrases:

People:

Places or events:

**In addition to the things you observed, here are some questions to consider:**

~What do you learn about Paul and prayer?

~What do you learn about Paul’s relationship (partnership) with the Philippians?

## INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?

The next step in understanding God's Word is to look at your observations and ask, "What does this mean?" God wants each of us to "accurately handle the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15) and to do that, we must learn how to correctly *interpret* what the passage is saying.

One of the first rules of sound interpretation is to understand the **context**. Try to follow Paul's flow of thought through the entire chapter and book. Philippians was written as a letter; Paul intended it to be read straight through just as we read letters today. The original letter didn't include verse numbers, chapter numbers and headings - they were added later for the convenience of modern readers.

Your interpretation of the passage should fit within the greater context of the epistle. Notice the sentences and paragraphs before and after the verses you are reading. Recognizing the context helps you understand what the passage meant to its original readers and that is key in understanding what God is saying.

### Consider these questions as you interpret the meaning of this week's passage:

~What "good work" will God complete in the Philippians (verse 6)? Is he referring to their sharing the gospel or their personal spiritual maturity or both? You may find these verses helpful: Phil. 1:12, Acts 9:36, Eph. 2:10, 2 Tim 3:17.

~In verse 9, why does Paul pray for their love to grow in knowledge and insight? What is the relationship between the two and why are both important?

~Why does Paul feel the need to assure the Philippians of the gospel's progress here in this passage?

~What is Paul's perspective on "life" and "death"? How does this differ from our culture's view?

## APPLICATION - What will I do about it?

After reading a passage asking "What does it say" and "What does it mean," the next important step is to ask "What will I do about it?" When you know what God has said, it is

important that you live in light of His Word, adjusting your life to line up with what God says is best and to move away from what God says will hurt you (sin).

Each week, consider how to apply what you have read. Think about how well your thoughts, attitudes and actions reflect God's desire and plan for His people as revealed in this passage. Ask: What does this passage reveal about God and His ways? How does this change who I am and how I should live?

**Consider the following questions:**

~As you consider Paul's relationship with the Philippians, how are you challenged or encouraged regarding your involvement in Christian community? What can you do this year to grow relationships with other believers?

~How does this passage motivate you to pray? What specific changes will you make this week in your prayer life?

~Verses 1:21-26 describe Paul's personal mission statement. Write out a mission statement for your life. Begin by answering the question, "Why am I here?"

~What circumstances in your life cause you to doubt God's goodness and provision? How does this week's lesson challenge your thinking in these situations?

~Reflect on Philippians chapter 1. Where do the circumstances and challenges of life threaten your joy?

~What does this passage reveal about God?

~How does this change who I am or how I see myself?

**Action Step:**

~What changes will you make as a result of this week's study? Make SMART goals!  
*Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound (page 6)*

~Who will you ask to hold you accountable for this action?

~Summary statement: in 10 words or less, summarize this passage.

**Prayer:**

Thank God for the truth you learned this week during your study. Ask Him to help you apply the truths you've learned.

**notes...**

## Week 3

# Serving Christ

### Memory Verse

*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."*  
Philippians 2:3-4

The Philippians' biggest challenge was not their outward circumstances but the inner issues and conflicts that were disrupting unity within the community. Paul opened the letter by sharing that he was not allowing his circumstances to control his attitude and actions. He continued to live for Christ and for the good of others (1:21, 24-25, 29) despite his situation. The "therefore" at the beginning of chapter 2 transitions from Paul's response to his circumstances to his instruction for the Philippians in handling their issues and conflicts. Encouraging them to think of others interests and well-being, he asks them to have the mindset of Christ (2:5). Paul then provides a significant passage explaining the incarnation of Christ (when God became man).

### OBSERVATION - What does it say?

Begin with prayer. Confess any sin, thank God for the Bible and ask Him to guide you in your study.

Begin your study by reading the entire book of Philippians in one sitting. Re-read the passage assigned for the week and begin the OIA study.

**Read this week's passage: Philippians 2:1-11**

Highlight or underline repeated words or phrases on the double spaced copy of Philippians in the back of the workbook. Observe the passage using the 5 Ws and H:

### Who? What? When? Why? Where? How?

In the space provided, respond to the questions by making notes about what you see. These are standard questions to use with any Bible study and are intended to get you thinking about what you are reading. You don't have to answer each question in fact sometimes you won't be able to! Remember - this is fun!



**My observations:**

WHO is ...

... Paul talking about?

... accomplishing the action?

... benefiting from the action?

WHAT is ...

...the meaning of this word?

...the significance of this phrase?

...happening?

WHEN ...

...is this taking place?

...will this situation occur?

WHY did the author...

...choose this word?

...use this phrase?

...use this command?

...not say\_\_\_?

WHERE is...

...this taking place?

...are they going?

HOW...

...was the action accomplished?

**The Big Idea:**

The Big Idea is the main theme, central truth, or primary command of the passage. After reading the passage and using the questions to make observations, write the themes you see. Try to find themes in each set of verses listed below. Write the themes as a single word or short phrase. Look over the list and choose the Big Idea of the passage. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

**Themes:**

2:1-4

2:5-8

2:9-11

The Big Idea for 2:1-11:

**Things I observed:**

Repeated words or phrases:

People:

Places or events:

**In addition to the things you observed, here are some questions to consider:**

~How does Paul define unity in this passage (2:2) and how does he define humility (2:3-4)? What is the relationship between the two?

~What are the results of Christ-like humility?

## **INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?**

Last week we learned to use the context to help us interpret the meaning of the passage. This week we will add a second interpretive skill: using cross-references.

Cross-references are other verses in any book of the Bible that are related to the words in the passage you are studying. They are often helpful in adding insight into the meaning of the passage. Most Bibles contain cross-references in the margins.

If your Bible does not, you can use [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com). Type in Philippians in the search box or click on "Bible Book List" and choose Philippians from the drop down-menu. Make sure you have NIV selected as the Bible version. In the tool bar, click the settings symbol (it's between the printer symbol and the speaker symbol) and then click "Cross-References" in the drop-down menu. As you read the passage, you can use the cursor to hover over the superscripts - the cross-reference will appear on your screen. Additionally, you can see a list of all of the cross-references at the bottom of the page. This is a great tool for gaining insight to the meaning of words and for seeing how the Bible fits together!

~List the cross-references you chose. What did you find interesting or helpful about each? How did it help your understanding of the word or passage?

**Questions to help with your interpretation.**

~Trace Paul's train of thought through this passage. How does 2:1-4 relate to the previous verses (1:27-30). How does 2:1-4 relate to the verses that follow (2:5-11)?

~What insight into Christian unity does Paul give in this passage (2:2-5)? Why is humility important to unity?

~In verse 2:7, what does it mean that Christ "made himself nothing"? Was Jesus less than God while on earth? How does the cross-reference 2 Corinthians 8:9 help you? Look up Matthew 24:36, Mark 5:30-31, John 1:1-3, 14 and Colossians 2:9 for more insight from Scripture.

~From this passage, what are the results of practicing humility like Christ?

## **APPLICATION - What will I do about it?**

Now that you have made observations and interpretations, answer the following questions and then step back to reflect on the passage as a whole. As you reflect, list principles that stand out to you.

A principle is a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to living the Christian life. Principles are timeless truths. They are not specific to a particular person or a particular time. An example from Philippians would be, "We should rejoice when the gospel is proclaimed."

**Reflection questions to help with application:**

~What attitudes or situations can cause division in relationships in your life whether at home, in the workplace, or in the church?

~How does Christ's example inspire you to practice humility?

~What does this passage reveal about God?

~How does this change who you are or how you see yourself?

~List principles from this passage. Remember, principles are timeless truths learned from the Bible.

~Choose one principle to apply this week.

**Action Step:**

~What will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be SMART! *Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound* (page 6)

~Who will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

~Summary statement: in 10 words or less, summarize this passage.

**Prayer:**

Jesus, thank you for taking the form of a servant by coming to earth as Savior. Help me to practice humility in my relationships looking to the interest of others first rather than my own.

## Week 4

# Becoming Like Christ

### Memory Verse

*"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."*

Philippians 2:12

In this passage, Paul continues the theme he began in 2:5-8 encouraging the Philippians to have the mindset of Christ. It's as if Paul is saying, "Your salvation is a gift, now unwrap it and enjoy it!" He encourages them to work out the salvation they have, to be like Christ and to have the mindset of Christ in all of life.

Christians demonstrate God's grace and power to the world through unity and love. In 2:14-16, Paul gives insight into living a God-honoring life in challenging situations by encouraging them to hold tightly to the word of life. As examples of a Christ-like mindset and Christ-like living, Paul speaks of Timothy and Epaphroditus who exemplified humility, unity and sacrificial service to others.

### OBSERVATION - What does it say?

Begin with prayer. Thank God for revealing Himself and His ways through the Bible and ask Him to guide you in your study.

Take time to read the entire book of Philippians before beginning this week's study. Try reading in a different version or listen to an audio recording.

### Read this week's passage: Philippians 2:12-30

As in previous weeks, highlight or underline repeated words or phrases on the double spaced copy of Philippians in the back of the workbook. Observe the passage using the 5 Ws and H: read the passage and write down your observations and themes. Refer to the OIA Method questions (pages 4-8) if you need help getting started. This week, we introduce a new step in observation: underline all of the verbs.

A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate that an action is taking place ("I did not run in vain" in 2:16) or that a state or condition exists ("it is God" in 2:13). Learning to notice verbs in the passage is helpful because it helps you see the author's flow of thought.

**The Big Idea:**

After reading the passage and using the questions to make observations, write themes (a single word or short phrase) for each set of verses below. Remember, a theme is the central truth or command of the passage. After writing themes for each group of verses, write what you think the Big Idea is for the passage. Identifying themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

**Themes:**

2:12-13

2:14-18

2:19-24

2:25-28

2:29-30

The Big Idea for 2:12-30

**Things I observed:**

Repeated words or phrases:

People:

Places or events:

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**INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?**

In addition to the skills you have been using, this week's interpretive skill is to look up background information. Learning more details about confusing names, words or places is helpful in understanding what the passage meant to the original audience. When you understand what the author was communicating to his audience, you are well on your way to solid interpretation.

Use a Bible dictionary in this phase. You can find Bible dictionaries at [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com). Choose "Study" from the toolbar at the top, click "More Resources" from the drop-down menu and scroll down to "Dictionaries." Remember - don't use "Commentaries" until after you have read and studied the text on your own!

### **Questions to help with interpretation:**

~How does 2:12-13 relate to the previous passage in 2:1-11?

~Why does Paul move from significant statements about our salvation (2:12-13) to such a basic command about grumbling? Trace Paul's flow of thought within this passage to determine what he is trying to convey.

~Joy is a theme repeated by Paul throughout this letter. What is the source of his joy in this passage?

### **APPLICATION - What will I do about it?**

Answer the following reflection questions. When you have attempted the questions, look at the passage as a whole and list principles (timeless truths).



**Reflection questions to help with application.**

~How often do you “grumble and complain?” What situations or things illicit this response?

~How can you spend your time so that do not “run in vain” (2:16)?

~How do verses 2:19-30 connect to 2:12-18?

~Why does Paul use Timothy and Epaphroditus as examples?

~What do you learn about caring for other people in this passage? What did it cost these men to serve others? What were the results of their service?

~In chapter 2 Paul speaks a great deal about unity. How do Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus model Christian unity?

~How does today's culture interfere with making deep, relational connections? How does this affect Christian community?

~List three principles from this passage. Remember, principles are timeless truths learned from the Bible.

~Choose one principle to apply this week.

~What does this passage reveal about God?

~How does this change who you are or how you see yourself?

**Action Step:**

~What will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life?

*SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound (page 6)*

~Who will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

~Summary statement: in 10 words or less, summarize this passage.

**Prayer:**

Thank God for the gift of eternal life through His Son, Jesus. Ask God to give you a Christ-like mindset so that your thoughts and actions would be pleasing to Him.

**notes...**

## Week 5

# Righteousness of Christ

### Memory Verse

*"What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ."*

Philippians 3:8

Paul was a very accomplished man with impressive credentials built on a respectable family background, strong moral character, professional zeal and success. But he considered all of his worldly accomplishments "a loss" and "rubbish" compared with the inestimable privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as Lord. Paul knew first-hand that all of his efforts at keeping the law and religious discipline did not make him right with God. Only by the gift of God's grace, through faith in Christ, could he have right standing with perfect, Holy God. From a zealous Pharisee persecuting the early church to a humble, suffering servant, the Apostle Paul is a powerful example of the transforming power and life-changing love of Jesus Christ.

### OBSERVATION - What does it say?

Begin with prayer. Thank God for revealing Himself and His ways through the Bible and ask Him to guide you in your study.

Read the entire book of Philippians before beginning this week's study. Repetitive reading helps with memorization and comprehension of the text!

### Read this week's passage: Philippians 3:1-11

Read the passage and write down your observations and themes; underline verbs (action words and phrases). Now, mark words or phrases that are repeated using colored pencils or highlighters. Include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as "loss" and "garbage" and accounting terms "gain" or "loss"). You will want to highlight things repeated in other places in Philippians as well (such as "rejoice" found in 1:18; 2:17, 18, 28; 3:1; 4:4, 10).

After reading the passage and using the questions to make observations, write themes (a single word or short phrase) for each group of verses. After identifying themes, write what you think the Big Idea is for the passage.

**My observations:**

**Themes:**

3:1-3

3:4-6

3:7-8

3:9-11

The Big Idea for 3:1-11:

**Things I observed:**

Repeated words or phrases:

People:

Places or events:

## **INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?**

Continue with the interpretation tools you have used in previous weeks. Refer to the OIA instructions pages 4-8 for help.

**Questions to help with interpretation.**

~Paul uses strong language to describe his opponents. Looking through the passage, where does Paul disagree with these people?

~Why does Paul give his spiritual background and accomplishments (3:4-6)?

~What do Paul's prior achievements (3:4-6) fail to provide? Read Romans 3:9-31. What insight do you learn from this passage?

~Why does Paul consider his prior accomplishments of little value (3:7-9)? What do these things fail to provide?

~How did Paul eventually experience what his accomplishments couldn't provide (Romans 3:28; 2 Corinthians 5:21)?

~What has changed for Paul?

## **APPLICATION - What will I do about it?**

Answer the reflection questions. Like last week, step back and look at the passage as a whole and list potential principles (timeless truths).

~When choosing a principle to apply in your life, you may find it helpful to think through these questions:

- Is there a sin to confess?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there an attitude to change?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there an example to follow?
- Is there a prayer to pray?
- Is there an error to avoid?
- Is there a truth to believe?
- Is there something for which to praise God?

~List three principles from this passage.

**Reflection questions to help with application.**

~What are possible downsides to strict adherence to religious rules? How does "adherence to rules" differ from voluntary spiritual disciplines like devotional reading, Bible study, memorization, prayer, fasting, etc.?

~Where do you "put confidence in the flesh?" Consider religious background, accomplishments, experiences, education or training. How might these things produce pride?

~What does this passage reveal about God?

~How does this change who you are or how you see yourself?

**Action Step:**

~What will you do differently this week to apply what you've learned to your life?

~Who will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

~Summary statement: in 10 words or less, summarize this passage.

**Prayer:**

Pray you would be reminded that it is not your works or accomplishments that give you eternal life. Praise God that it's His unfathomable grace that saves you!

## Week 6

# Press on for Christ

### Memory Verse

*"Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.."*

Philippians 3:13-14

Paul's mission was to know Christ, live for Christ and fulfill the purposes of Christ. He was consumed with the goal of pursuing his new life in Christ, determined to prevent anything from distracting him as he pressed on toward the prize. Paul did not let the sins and regrets of his past keep him from moving forward into the work that God had for him. Paul serves as an excellent example of the power of the gospel to give new life, vibrant hope and meaningful purpose to anyone who will trust in Christ.

### OBSERVATION - What does it say?

Begin with prayer. Thank God for revealing Himself and His ways through the Bible and ask Him to guide you in your study.

Read the entire book of Philippians before beginning this week's study.

### Read this week's passage: Philippians 3:12-21

As in previous weeks, read the passage. Make note of your observations; write themes; underline verbs; highlight repeated words or phrases. Continue using the copy of Philippians at the back of your workbook. Use colored pens or pencils, highlighters, or symbols. This is your work sheet for marking in the way that makes most sense for you!

### The Big Idea

Write themes for each section of verses below. Reflect on the themes and jot down what you consider to be the Big Idea for the passage.

### Themes:

3:12-14

3:15-16



3:17-19

3:20-21

The Big Idea for 3:12-21:

**Things I observed:**

Repeated words or phrases:

People:

Places or events:

## **INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?**

As in past weeks, use context, cross-references, definitions and background information to help you determine what the passage means. It is tempting to use Commentaries but don't! It is important to develop skills that help you interpret God's Word for yourself. Wrestle with it. Think about it. Take your best shot! Don't become dependent on other people to tell you what God has said.

**Questions to help with interpretation:**

~What is Paul hoping to "take hold of" (3:12-14)?

~What is the "mindset" that Paul want the Philippians to imitate (3:15-16)?

~What is the example the Philippians are to follow (3:17)? What pattern has he set? You may find it helpful to look back at previous chapters for character traits demonstrated by Paul.

~Paul states that our citizenship is in heaven (3:20- 21)? What difference should that make in how we live our lives?

## **APPLICATION - What will I do about it?**

Answer the following reflection questions. When you have attempted the questions, look at the passage as a whole and list principles (timeless truths) that stand out for the passage.

### **Reflection questions to help with application:**

~What goals are you currently pursuing? How do they reflect your identity as a citizen of heaven?

~How will you modify your goals as you consider Paul's example of making life in Christ a priority?

~Consider the people that you spend time with. How are they encouraging you to grow in Christlikeness?

~With whom could you pursue a relationship (friend, mentor) that would help you live a more Christ-centered life?

~What example do you set for those who may be observing your Christian walk?

~Choose one principle to apply this week. When choosing a principle to apply in your life, you may find it helpful to think through these questions:

Is there a sin to confess?  
Is there a promise to claim?  
Is there an attitude to change?  
Is there a command to obey?  
Is there an example to follow?  
Is there a prayer to pray?  
Is there an error to avoid?  
Is there a truth to believe?  
Is there something for which to praise God?

~List three principles from this passage.

~What does this passage reveal about God?

~How does this change who you are or how you see yourself?

**Action Step:**

~What will you do differently this week to apply what you are learning to your life?  
*Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound (page 6)*

~Who will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

~Summary statement: in 10 words or less, summarize this passage.

**Prayer:**

Ask for God to align your goals with His. Pray for a mind that is focused on the true goal: living a Christ-centered life!

## Week 7

# Peace of Christ

### Memory Verse

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Philippians 4:6-7

Paul begins to close his letter to the Philippians by emphasizing things he has addressed earlier. He re-affirms the importance of unity by pleading with two women in the church to agree with one another. The unresolved conflict between the two was spilling over to impact the church as a whole. It was essential that they put aside their differences for the sake of unity within the church. Paul goes on to encourage the Philippians to be people of prayer. They were to resist the temptation to worry or be anxious and to practice thanksgiving, making their requests known to God through prayer. He implores them to think positive thoughts - to focus on all that is right, noble and good so that the peace of God will fill their hearts and minds.

### OBSERVATION - What does it say?

Begin with prayer. Thank God for the gift of His Word. God, help me learn Your Word, love Your Word and live Your Word!

Read the entire book of Philippians and begin this week's study.

### Read this week's passage: Philippians 4:1-9

Continue using the copy of Philippians at the back of your workbook. Use colored pens or pencils, highlighters, or symbols to mark the text in a way that helps you observe meaningful details. Ask questions of the text making note of observations, themes, verbs, repeated words and phrases.

### The Big Idea:

Themes:

4:1-3

4:4-5

4:6-7

4:8-9

The Big Idea for 4:1-9:

**Things I observed:**

Repeated words or phrases:

People:

Places or events:

## **INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?**

Use context, cross-references, definitions and background information to help you determine what the passage means. Answer the questions below and write what you think the passage means.

**Questions to help with interpretation.**

~Paul addresses a conflict between two people in verse 4:2. What is the danger of conflict in the Christian community?

~Consider Paul's words in verses 4:4-9. How do these commands affect the conflict and its resolution?

~Reflect on verses 4:8-9. How do they relate to 4:2-7?

## **APPLICATION - What will I do about it?**

Answer the following reflection questions. When you have attempted the questions, look at the passage as a whole and list potential principles (timeless truths).

### **Reflection questions to help with application:**

~How do you typically handle conflict? Why?

~With whom do you have unresolved tension? What have you learned in this passage that will help you move toward resolution? What is the first step?

~List three principles from this passage.

~Choose one principle to apply this week.

~What does this passage reveal about God?

~How does this change who you are or how you see yourself?

**Action Step:**

~What will you do differently this week to apply what you are learning to your life?

*SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound (page 6)*

~Who will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

~Summary statement: in 10 words or less, summarize this passage.

**Prayer:**

Thank God for His unwavering peace. Confess to Him the areas in your life in which you have been anxious or fearful, and ask Him to give you peace as you give Him control over those areas.

## Week 8

# Resting in Christ

### Memory Verse

*"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."*

Philippians 4:19

Paul brings his letter to the Philippians to a close by thanking them for their continued encouragement and support. His close relationship with the group of believers, specifically their continued perseverance in their faith, was a source of joy and comfort to the Apostle. In these tender closing words, we get a glimpse into the heart of Paul. He had learned to be content in any situation, whether in plenty or in need, by drawing on the strength of Christ. He experienced contentment and satisfaction in life, not because things around him were good, but because his focus was on Jesus Christ. Paul focused on running his race and doing the things that God had called him to do. His priorities were straight; God provided his every need.

### OBSERVATION - What does it say?

Begin with prayer. Thank God for the gift of His Word. God, help me learn Your Word, love Your Word and live Your Word!

Read the entire book of Philippians before beginning this week's study.

### Read this week's passage: Philippians 4:10-23

Use the copy of Philippians at the back of your workbook to mark and highlight the text in a way that helps you observe meaningful details. Ask questions of the text making note of observations, themes, verbs, repeated words and phrases.

### The Big Idea:

Themes:

4:11-12

4:13-16

4:17-18



4:19-23

The Big Idea for 4:10-23:

**Things I observed:**

Repeated words or phrases:

People:

Places or events:

## **INTERPRETATION - What does it mean?**

Use context, cross-references, definitions and background information to help you determine what the passage means. Answer the questions below and write what you think the passage means.

**Questions to help with interpretation:**

~Paul ends this letter by thanking the Philippians for their financial support. Why is giving so important to him (Matthew 6:21, 24; Romans 12:1)?

~How does contentment impact our perspective and use of money (1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-18)?

~What did Paul learn (4:11-13)?

~Similar to 4:6-7, verse 13 is one of the most frequently quoted verses in the whole Bible. Considering the context, what exactly is the promise to lay hold of here?

## **APPLICATION - What will I do about it?**

Answer the following reflection questions. When you have attempted the questions, look at the passage as a whole and list principles.

### **Reflection questions to help with application:**

~In what area of your life do you find it difficult to be content?

~Paul learned to be content by focusing on God's character. What character traits of God will you meditate on to help you grow in contentment?

~List three principles from this passage.

~Choose one principle to apply this week.

~What does this passage reveal about God?

~How does this change who you are or how you see yourself?

**Action Step:**

~What will you do differently this week to apply what you are learning to your life?

~Who will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

~Summary statement: in 10 words or less, summarize this passage.

**Prayer:**

Thank God for the truth you learned this week during your study. Ask Him to help you apply the truths you've learned.

## **Chapter 1**

**1** Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

**2** Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**3** 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.

**7** It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. **8** God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

**9** And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, **10** so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, **11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

**12** 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.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, **19** for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. **20** I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. **21** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. **22** If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! **23** I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; **24** but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. **25** Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, **26** so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

**27** 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.

## **Chapter 2**

**1** Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, **2** then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. **3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

**5** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

**6** Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;  
**7** rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

**8** And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!

**9** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
**10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

**11** and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

**12** Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, **13** for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

**14** Do everything without grumbling or arguing, **15** so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky **16** as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. **17** But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. **18** So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

**19** I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. **20** I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. **21** For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. **22** But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. **23** I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. **24** And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

**25** But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. **26** For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. **27** Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. **28** Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again

you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. **29** So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, **30** because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.

### **Chapter 3**

**1** Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. **2** Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. **3** For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— **4** though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: **5** circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

**7** But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. **8** What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. **10** I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, **11** and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.



**12** Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. **13** Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

**15** All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. **16** Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

**17** Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. **18** For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. **19** Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. **20** But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

## **Chapter 4**

**1** Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

**2** I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. **3** Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the

cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

**4** Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**8** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. **9** Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

**10** I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. **11** I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. **12** I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. **13** I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

**14** Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. **15** 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. **17** Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. **18** I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus

the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. **19** And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

**20** To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**21** Greet all God's people in Christ Jesus. The brothers and sisters who are with me send greetings. **22** All God's people here send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

**23** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

**notes...**

## **connections...**