

PHILIPPIANS

— to live is Christ —

Word of Faith International Christian Center – St. Thomas
Teaching the Word, Doing the Work, Touching the World

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

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The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians

Author: Philippians 1:1 identifies the author of the Book of Philippians as the apostle Paul.

Purpose: The Epistle to the Philippians, one of Paul’s prison epistles, was written in Rome. It was at Philippi, which the apostle visited on his second missionary journey (**Acts 16:12**), that Lydia and the Philippian jailer and his family were converted to Christ. Now, some few years later, the church was well established, as may be inferred from its address which includes “bishops (elders) and deacons” (**Philippians 1:1**).

The occasion of the epistle was to acknowledge a gift of money from the church at Philippi, brought to the apostle by Epaphroditus, one of its members (**Philippians 4:10-18**). This is a tender letter to a group of Christians who were especially close to the heart of Paul (**2 Corinthians 8:1-6**), and comparatively little is said about doctrinal error.

Date: The Book of Philippians was written in approximately A.D. 61.

Background: The Epistle to the Philippians

Philippians is the most personal of all the epistles of Paul that were not written to individuals. In the four chapters of the Book of Philippians there are no less than one hundred uses of the first person pronoun. Paul was not talking about himself in any boastful spirit, nor was he engaged in defense of his personal ministry. The Philippians church had been intensely loyal to Paul and he felt that he could speak to them freely of his tribulations and spiritual ambitions.

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Content:

The two topics predominate in the text of Philippians. One is the gospel, which Paul mentions nine times. He speaks of the fellowship in the gospel (1:5), the confirmation of the gospel (1:7), the progress of the gospel (1:12), the defense of the gospel (1:16), worthy of the gospel (1:27), striving for the faith of the gospel (1:27), service of the gospel (2:22), labor in the gospel (4:3), and the beginning of the gospel (4:15).

The second topic in the Philippians that Paul stressed is joy. His outlook in Rome was bleak, since his enemies were seeking to undermine his work, and sudden execution was a possible outcome of the trial. This is what is so important about this epistle you can rejoice in the middle of your situation, you can rejoice in the middle of your trial, you can rejoice in the middle of your tribulation. Paul said if I can do it you can do it.

Paul rejoiced in ever remembrance of the Philippians (1:3) because Christ was preached, whether sincerely or hypocritically (1:18), in the growth of humility in his follower (2:2), in his personal sacrifice in Christ (2:17), and in the gifts and goodwill of his friends (4:10). All through the epistle the joy of faith is exemplified and contrast with the circumstances he was facing.

Philippians provides an insight into the driving motive in the life of Paul His amazing devotion and his unflagging zeal and that placed him among the great leaders of history who have devoted their lives to a cause which they believed in. Paul believed in his cause to him all life was summed up in Christ. To “gain” him, to “know” him, to “be found” in him, to attain the goal set in him engaged all of Paul’s attention.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS (The Personal Epistle)

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|-------------|--|------------------|
| I. | Salutations | 1:1-2 |
| II. | Thanksgiving for Personal Fellowship | 1:3-11 |
| | A. Gratitude | |
| | B. Confidence | |
| | C. Prayer | |
| III. | Encouragement in Personal Circumstances | 1:12-2:18 |

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A. Paul's Personal Courage	1:12-26
B. Paul's Encouragement to the Philippians	1:27-30
C. Christ, the Mode for Service	2:1-11
D. The Objective of Service	2:12-18
IV. Personal Relations with Messengers	2:19-30
V. Personal Warning against Legalism	3:1-41
A. Personal Example	3:1-16
B. Exhortation to the Philippians	3:17-4:1
VI. V. Conclusion Counsel and Greetings	4:2-23
A. Unity	4:2-3
B. Joy	4:4-7
C. Thought	4:8-9
D. Thanksgiving	4:10-20
E. Salutations	4:21-23

OUR FAVORITE VERSES FROM PHILIPPIANS

Philippians 1:21: *"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."*

Philippians 3:7: *"But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ."*

Philippians 4:4: *"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"*

Philippians 4:6-7: *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, 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 4:13: *"I can do everything through him who gives me strength."*