

# PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES

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PHILIPPIANS

STUDY GUIDE



# PHILIPPIANS

## SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 16:8-40

Acts 20:1-6

The Book of Philippians

I Thessalonians 2:2

## THEME

The central theme of the book of Philippians is death to self so that Christ may live through us.

### I. INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS

- A. Paul is credited with writing the book of Philippians while in prison. Although his place of imprisonment is debated, there is strong evidence that he was in Rome rather than Ephesus or Caesarea.
- B. Philippi was a Roman colony and a military outpost. It was more a military city than a commercial center.
- C. The "Macedonian call" received through a dream in Troas initiated Paul's first trip to Philippi, which resulted in a beating, imprisonment, and conversion of the Philippian jailer.
- D. Acts 16:8-40 gives an account of Paul's initial visit to Philippi.
- E. In Acts 20:6, Philippi is mentioned again.
- F. In his first letter to the church at Thessalonica, Paul mentions Philippi. (I Thessalonians 2:2)
- G. In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul mentions Thessalonica and Macedonia.
- H. Paul opens this letter by sending greetings from both Timothy and himself. (Philippians 1:1)

## II. CHAPTER ONE

- A. Paul identifies Timothy and himself as slaves (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:1)
- B. The letter to the Philippians is directed to “all the saints in Christ Jesus” (in Philippi) **and** to the bishops and deacons. (Philippians 1:1)
- C. Paul greets those to whom he is writing with grace and peace from God **our** Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:2)
- D. The relationship between Paul and the Philippians is so strong that he thanks God for them every time he thinks about them. (Philippians 1:3)
- E. Paul's prayers for the Philippians are always joyful because of their fellowship and consistency in the gospel. (Philippians 1:4-5)
- F. Paul expresses his confidence in the Lord and reveals a principle when he states, “He who has begun a good work in you will complete what He started.” (Philippians 1:6)
  - 1. God finishes everything He begins!
  - 2. This principle of finishing what He begins will continue until Jesus returns.
- G. Paul assures the Philippians that his confidence is right and fitting, and he expresses his appreciation for the fact that he is always in their hearts. (Philippians 1:7)
  - 1. The Philippians are faithful to Paul, even while he is in prison.
  - 2. Paul knows that the Philippians will stand by him when he defends the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - 3. Paul reminds the Philippians of the grace of God which is mutually shared between them. (Philippians 1:7)
- H. Paul expresses his affectionate desire for the Philippians, declaring God to be his witness. (Philippians 1:8)

- I. Paul prays that the Philippians' love will grow to excess in knowledge and discernment. (Philippians 1:9)
  - 1. The purpose for the development of love is to enable the believer to properly distinguish what is and is not God.
  - 2. Those who are mature in love will not be deceived; therefore, they will be without hypocrisy, and they will be blameless.
  
- J. Paul also prays that the Philippians will be filled with fruit that comes as a result of being in right standing with God. (Philippians 1:11)
  - 1. The fruits of righteousness come through Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:11)
  - 2. The fruits of righteousness bring glory and praise unto God. (Philippians 1:11)
  
- K. The imprisonment of Paul actually serves to advance the gospel of Jesus. (Philippians 1:12)
  - 1. News spreads throughout the imperial guard and to others that Paul is in prison because of his belief in Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:13)
  - 2. Paul's imprisonment causes many believers to become more confident to boldly proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:14)
  
- L. Although the gospel of Jesus Christ is being proclaimed at this time, the motives for preaching are not the same. (Philippians 1:15-17)
  - 1. Some proclaim the gospel with a jealous and argumentative spirit.
  - 2. Those who proclaim the gospel with a jealous and argumentative spirit do so for the purpose of upsetting Paul.
  - 3. Others proclaim the gospel out of a pure heart with right motives.

4. Those who preach the gospel with a pure heart demonstrate their love for Paul and his stand for Jesus Christ.
  5. Even though the motive for preaching the gospel is not always pure, Paul rejoices in the fact that the gospel of Jesus Christ is being proclaimed. (Philippians 1:18)
  6. Paul is confident that the proclamation of the gospel, coupled with the prayers of the Philippians and the Spirit of Jesus Christ, will serve his best interest. (Philippians 1:19)
- M. Paul is certain that, regardless of the outcome of his imprisonment, he will not be ashamed. (Philippians 1:20)
- N. He further states that, whether he lives or dies, Jesus Christ will be magnified in his body. (Philippians 1:20)
- O. The statement, "For to me to live is Christ," is a testimony to the death of the carnal man. (Philippians 1:21)
- P. The statement, "to die is gain," reveals Paul's attitude toward death. (Philippians 1:21)
1. Paul does not seem to fear death; it appears that he is looking forward to death with an anticipation of being in God's presence. (II Corinthians 5:8)
  2. What awaits the believer after death is better than the things he faces in this life.
  3. To the believer, death is a victory, not a defeat.
- Q. Paul has determined that, if his life is spared, he will continue to magnify the fruit of Jesus Christ living in him. (Philippians 1:22)
- R. It appears that the decision to live or die is left to the discretion of Paul. (Philippians 1:22)
1. The choice between living and dying is a very difficult one for Paul. (Philippians 1:23)

2. Paul has a desire to lay down his life so that he can be with Jesus, which would be better for him. (Philippians 1:23)
  3. When he considers the Philippians, he realizes that it would be more beneficial for the believers if he remain alive. (Philippians 1:24)
- S. After being convinced that it would be more profitable for him to live, Paul assures the Philippians that he will remain and continue to assist them in their spiritual growth. (Philippians 1:25)
- T. Paul realizes that a reunion with the Philippians would give them an additional cause to praise God. (Philippians 1:26)
- U. The Philippians are instructed to conduct themselves in a way that will not bring a reproach against the gospel. (Philippians 1:27)
- V. Whether absent or present, Paul wants to be certain that the report he hears of the Philippians is that they stand together in one spirit, with one soul (mind), laboring together in the faith of the gospel. (Philippians 1:28)
- W. The Philippians are counseled not to fear those who oppose them. The lack of fear will serve as proof of destruction for the opposers but salvation for the believers. (Philippians 1:28)
- X. The Philippians are not only given the privilege of believing in Jesus Christ, but they are also given the privilege of suffering for Christ's sake. (Philippians 1:29)
- Y. The suffering referred to by Paul is the conflict and opposition experienced because of the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:30)
1. Paul meets the Philippians in conflict, and the conflict continues as he shares the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  2. The Philippians have the opportunity to share in these afflictions by boldly proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of opposition.

### III. CHAPTER TWO

- A. Paul uses the word "if" four times in the first verse. (Philippians 2:1)
  - 1. If there is any comfort in Christ, do this...
  - 2. If there is any consolation of love, do this...
  - 3. If there is any fellowship of the Spirit, do this...
  - 4. If there are any compassions and pities, do this...
- B. Paul's request to the Philippians is to fill him with delight by thinking alike, sharing the same love, becoming unified in soul, and working together for one purpose. (Philippians 2:2)
- C. Christians should never divide into contentious groups or seek glory for themselves. (Philippians 2:3)
- D. Humility should govern the Christian's life. We must not think more of ourselves than we do others. (Philippians 2:3)
- E. Not only should Christians attend to their own interests, but they must also be concerned about the interests of others. (Philippians 2:4)
- F. Believers should allow the attitude and mind of Christ to control their lives. (Philippians 2:5)
- G. Jesus, Who existed in the form of God, did not attempt to retain His deity. (Philippians 2:6)
- H. He emptied Himself of His rights and privileges as deity to become a slave (*doulos*), a physical man. (Philippians 2:7)
- I. As a human being, He submitted to the humiliation of dying on a cross. (Philippians 2:8)
- J. Because Jesus humbled Himself, God raised Him and gave unto Him a name that is above every name. (Philippians 2:9; James 4:10; I Peter 5:6)

- K. At the name of Jesus, every knee is to bow of heavenly (above the sky), worldly (in the earth), and subterranean (beneath the earth) forces. (Philippians 2:10)
- L. Every tongue is to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, thereby glorifying God the Father. (Philippians 2:11)
- M. Paul commends the Philippians for always being obedient, even in his absence, and he exhorts them to **work out** (accomplish/finish) **their salvation** (*soteria* - rescue/safety) **with fear** (*phobos* - alarm/fright) **and trembling** (quaking with fear). (Philippians 2:12)
  - 1. The instructions indicate that something must be done with the salvation that has been obtained through Jesus Christ.
  - 2. Salvation begins inside, but it is not consummated until it manifests outside.
- N. God is on the inside of the believer, working to bring forth His will and pleasure. (Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 3:20)
- O. Everything we do must be done without grumbling and debate. (Philippians 2:14)
  - 1. The purpose for not grumbling and debating is to keep ourselves blameless and innocent. As children of God, we must be unblameable. (Philippians 2:15)
  - 2. In the midst of a perverted and distorted generation, we must shine as lights in the world (*kosmos*). (Philippians 2:15)
- P. Paul exhorts the Philippians to retain the word (*logos*) of life (*zoe*) that it might result in glory for him in the day of Christ. (Philippians 2:16)
- Q. The Philippians have the opportunity to prove that Paul's labor in the gospel is not in vain. (Philippians 2:16)
- R. Paul states that, in addition to the sacrifice of Jesus, upon which their faith is established, he is willing to be a drink offering. (Philippians 2:17)

1. Under the Old Covenant, a drink offering was given in addition to a sacrifice.
  2. Paul does not see himself as a sacrifice for sin; he sees himself as one who can and is willing to enhance the sacrifice for sin through his death.
  3. Paul is willing to give his life to further the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  4. Paul encourages the Philippians to rejoice with him if this event occurs. (Philippians 2:18)
- S. Paul expresses his desire to send Timothy to Philippi. He is certain that news from Philippi will encourage him. (Philippians 2:19)
- T. Paul assures the Philippians that Timothy and he are of the same spirit, and that Timothy's concern for them is genuine. (Philippians 2:20)
- U. Paul expresses his disappointment in other ministers who seek their own interests, not the interests of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:21)
- V. Timothy has already proved himself by serving Paul like a son would serve his father. (Philippians 2:22)
- W. Paul's intent is to send Timothy as soon as he sees how matters are going to go for him in court. (Philippians 2:23)
- X. Paul is trusting that the Lord will allow him the opportunity to visit the Philippians very soon. (Philippians 2:24)
- Y. Paul deems it necessary to send Epaphroditus back to the Philippians. (Philippians 2:25)
1. Paul considers Epaphroditus to be a brother in the Lord, a companion in the labor of the Lord, and a fellow soldier. (Philippians 2:25)
  2. Epaphroditus, who is sent to Paul by the Philippians, serves as a messenger and a minister to Paul's needs. (Philippians 2:25)

- Z. Epaphroditus has been homesick, and the Philippians are concerned about his health when they hear that he has been quite ill, so Paul sends him home. (Philippians 2:26)
- AA. Epaphroditus' sickness has been life-threatening, but God, in His mercy, spares his life. (Philippians 2:27)
  - 1. Not only is God's mercy extended to Epaphroditus, but Paul is a beneficiary as well. (Philippians 2:27)
  - 2. The death of Epaphroditus would have added sadness to an already unpleasant situation. (Philippians 2:27)
- BB. The return of Epaphroditus is intended to bring joy to both the Philippians and Paul. (Philippians 2:28)
- CC. The Philippians are exhorted to receive cheerfully Epaphroditus and to esteem men of his caliber highly. (Philippians 2:29)
- DD. Paul explains the cause of Epaphroditus' sickness. (Philippians 2:30)
  - 1. The "work of Christ" is more important to Epaphroditus than his own health. (Philippians 2:30)
  - 2. Epaphroditus had risked his life for the purpose of meeting Paul's needs. He is an excellent representative for the Philippians. (Philippians 2:30)
  - 3. Paul is in prison; therefore, he is dependent upon Epaphroditus to do the things he is unable to do.

#### IV. CHAPTER THREE

- A. Paul exhorts the Philippians to "rejoice in the Lord," not in the flesh. (Philippians 3:1)
- B. The reiteration of instructions is given to the Philippians for their benefit. (Philippians 3:1)
- C. Paul warns the Philippians to beware of Judaizers. (Philippians 3:2)

1. Judaizers were early converts to Christianity who tried to force believers from non-Jewish backgrounds to adopt Jewish customs as a condition of salvation.
  2. The Judaizers would not accept salvation without circumcision, but true salvation does not require rules and regulations in addition to Jesus. (Acts 15:1)
- D. Those who are truly saved have received circumcision of the heart. These believers worship God in spirit, placing their emphasis on Jesus Christ, not the flesh. (Romans 2:29; Philippians 3:3)
- E. Naturally speaking, Paul could have placed great confidence in the flesh. (Philippians 3:4)
1. Paul was circumcised when he was eight days old, thus fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant. (Genesis 17:11-12; Philippians 3:5)
  2. He was a descendant of the Israelite tribe of Benjamin. (Philippians 3:5)
  3. From the perspective of religion, both he and his parents were Hebrew. (Philippians 3:5)
  4. Not only was Paul a Hebrew, but he was also a member of the strictest sect in Hebrew religion. He was a Pharisee. (Philippians 3:5)
  5. Prior to his conversion, Paul was so zealous for his religion that he persecuted the Church. (Acts 9:1-2; Philippians 3:6)
  6. By the standard of the law, Paul was blameless. (Philippians 3:6)
- F. Paul had relinquished his natural achievements when he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. (Philippians 3:7)
1. Nothing in the past or present can be compared to Jesus. (Philippians 3:8)
  2. Knowledge of Jesus Christ is superior to all other knowledge and achievements. (Philippians 3:8)

3. Compared to Christ, natural things should be considered as trash. We must release the natural and cling to Jesus Christ. (Philippians 3:8)
- G. Paul had realized that righteousness received through faith in Jesus Christ far exceeds the righteousness of the law, which must be obtained through works. (Philippians 3:9)
  - H. Paul expresses his desire to know Jesus. (Philippians 3:10)
    1. The “know” spoken of by Paul in this passage of scripture is more than a casual acquaintance. He uses the Greek word *ginosko*, which means to know in the sense of absolutely knowing.
    2. It is not enough to know **about** Jesus; we must personally know **Him**.
  - I. Not only does Paul want to know Jesus, but he also wants to know him in the power of his resurrection. (Philippians 3:10)
  - J. Paul wants to know Jesus in all aspects of His life, including suffering. (Philippians 3:10)
  - K. Paul desires to be conformed to the death of Jesus. (Philippians 3:10)
    1. Paul is not suggesting that he would like to die physically; his desire is to die to carnality.
    2. One who does not yield to the desires of the natural man has conformed to the death of Jesus.
  - L. The purpose for conforming to the death of Jesus is to experience the resurrection of Jesus. (Philippians 3:11)
  - M. Paul realizes that he has not yet reached his desired goal, so he continues to press on until the death and resurrection of Jesus are completed in him. (Philippians 3:12)
  - N. Paul declares that he does not consider himself to have arrived at perfection, so he forgets the past and focuses on the future. (Philippians 3:13)

- O. The goal toward which Paul is pressing appears to be a reward that is found in Jesus Christ. (Philippians 3:14)
- P. Paul encourages all the mature believers to share his attitude about the aforementioned things--knowing Jesus; knowing the power of His resurrection; knowing the fellowship of His suffering; conforming to the death of Jesus; realizing that none have attained perfection; and putting forth the necessary effort to arrive at this place in Jesus Christ. (Philippians 3:15)
- Q. We must walk according to our level of maturity in Jesus, maintaining a constant desire for spiritual growth. (Philippians 3:16)
- R. Paul exhorts the brethren to follow his Christian example and also to recognize the brethren who are following his example. (Philippians 3:17)
- S. Many professing Christians live as enemies of the cross. They refuse to bring the flesh under subjection; consequently, they do not conform to the death of Jesus. (Philippians 3:18)
- T. Those who conform to the ways of the world will have a destructive end. (Philippians 3:19)
- U. Those who conform to the world make themselves the center of attention. They place all their attention on natural things. (Philippians 3:19)
- V. The believer's citizenship is in heaven; consequently, he should follow after those things which are peculiar to his citizenship. (Philippians 3:20)
- W. The believer is eagerly waiting for his Savior from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 3:20)
- X. Jesus will transform our ordinary (inferior) bodies so that they will be conformed to His glorious body. (Philippians 3:21)
- Y. This physical transformation will occur as a result of Jesus' power and ability, by which He will subdue all things, including our physical bodies. (Philippians 3:21)

#### IV. CHAPTER FOUR

- A. Paul loves and longs to see the Philippians. He refers to them as his "joy" and "crown." (Philippians 4:1)
- B. He instructs the Philippians to remain in the Lord. (Philippians 4:1)
- C. Paul exhorts Euodia and Syntyche to think alike, thereby keeping the door closed to dissension. (Philippians 4:2)
- D. Paul urges the Philippians, whom he recognizes as true companions, to assist these women and others who have helped him spread the gospel of Jesus. (Philippians 4:3)
- E. Paul declares that the names of those who have labored with him are recorded in the Book of Life. (Philippians 4:3)
- F. Paul instructs the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord always. (Philippians 4:4)
- G. He encourages them to allow their gentle and kind disposition to be seen by everyone and continues by saying, "The Lord is near." (Philippians 4:5)
- H. Believers should not worry about anything; they should pray about everything. (Philippians 4:6)
- I. When believers make their requests unto God, they should do so with petition and thanksgiving. (Philippians 4:6)
- J. God's peace, which cannot be explained, will keep the hearts and minds of the believers secure in Jesus Christ. (Philippians 4:7)
- K. The believers are instructed to control their thoughts. They must not meditate on anything negative. (Philippians 4:8)
- L. Truth, honor, justice, purity, love, goodness, virtue, and praise are all positive. The thoughts of the believer must be screened through these positive attributes. (Philippians 4:8)

- M. Paul tells the Philippians that, if they will do the things that they have heard and seen him do, they, too, will experience the peace of God. (Philippians 4:9)
- N. Paul commends the Philippians for thinking about him, and He also commends them for acting on their thoughts when they have opportunity. (Philippians 4:10)
- O. Paul's remarks are not related to his needs. He has learned to live and adapt to the circumstances, whether good or bad. (Philippians 4:11)
- P. Paul has learned how to live in both humble (deficient) and abundant settings. He knows what it is like to be hungry or to be sufficiently fed. He has experienced both lack and plenty. (Philippians 4:12)
- Q. The revelation of what Paul has learned is capsulized in this statement, "I can do all things through Christ Who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:13)
- R. Paul assures the Philippians that they have done well by ministering to his needs. (Philippians 4:14)
- S. Paul reminds the Philippians that they are the only ones who shared with him when he left Macedonia. (Philippians 4:15)
- T. The Philippians also ministered to Paul's needs when he was in Thessalonica. (Philippians 4:16)
- U. Paul assures the Philippians that he is not seeking their gifts, but his desire is to see fruit credited to their account. (Philippians 4:17)
- V. Paul declares that he is not in need because of the things sent by the Philippians at the hands of Epaphroditus. (Philippians 4:18)
- W. Paul compares the gift sent by the Philippians to a sweet-smelling sacrifice, which is acceptable and well-pleasing unto God. (Philippians 4:18)
- X. Paul assures the Philippians that, because of their giving, **his** God will supply all their needs, according to His riches in glory through Jesus Christ. (Philippians 4:19)

- Y. Although the Philippians are to be commended for their benevolence, Paul is careful to give all honor and glory to God. (Philippians 4:20)
- Z. Paul sends his greeting to all the "saints in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:21)
- AA. The brethren who are with Paul send their greetings to the Philippians. (Philippians 4:21)
- BB. The saints who are with Paul also send their greetings, especially those who are in Caesar's house. (Philippians 4:22)
- CC. Paul concludes with his usual benediction: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." (Philippians 4:23)