

# PHILIPPIANS

THE BELIEVER'S PROGRESS  
AND JOY IN THE FAITH



*STANDING SIDE BY SIDE  
IN THE GOSPEL*





**LIVING HOPE**  
baptist church

*Blessed be the God and Father  
of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who according to  
His abundant mercy  
has begotten us again to a  
**Living Hope**  
through the resurrection of  
Jesus Christ from the dead.*

*1 Peter 1:3*



## **Community Group Purpose Statement**

We, as smaller gatherings of one family, will practice with our lives the gospel truths that we confess with our mouths. Together, we will allow our lives to be challenged by the gospel and one another; we will live lives of boldness and purpose. As we walk in the light of the gospel, we will point to the grace of God and its power to set lives free from sin and death. We will continue praying, teaching, making disciples, and bearing one another's burdens. Following the pattern set before us by Jesus, we will bring joy to our family (the church) and glory to his name.

## **What is a Community Group?**

Community groups are small gatherings of people that meet regularly for friendship, accountability, study and prayer, laughter, and occasionally tears. Community groups are an essential expression of the mission of Living Hope Baptist Church. They're a place where we learn more about Jesus and life together. They're the place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another toward the life that God intends for us.

Each community group is unique, shaped by its neighborhood and the people who attend. However, you can expect a weekly gathering in a residence that involves food, conversation, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, and service in the neighborhood. At the heart of each community group is the desire to see an authentic community marked by love for Jesus, one another, and the neighborhood.

## **Why Should I Join a Community Group?**

The God of the Bible is a Trinitarian God who is one and three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. God has made us in his image, which means we are made for community and friendship. And when we are not living in community we suffer because life in a sinful world is too complex and tempting to journey alone. Therefore, community groups are a place where we can live in relationship with one another through the ups and downs of life.



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*Chapter I*  
Introduction to  
Philippians

## **SUMMARY**

Paul wrote the letter to the church at Philippi while in prison at Rome. “First, he wanted to express in writing his thanks for the Philippians’ gift (4:10-18). Second, he wanted the Philippians to know why he decided to return Epaphroditus to them, so they would not think his service to Paul had been unsatisfactory (2:25-26). Third, he wanted to inform them about his circumstances at Rome (1:12-26). Fourth, he wrote to exhort them to unity (2:1-2; 4:2). Finally, he wrote to warn them against false teachers (3:1-4:1)” [Taken from the Introduction to Philippians from the John MacArthur Study Bible]

Acts 16 records for us the beginning of this church at Philippi which occurred on Paul’s second missionary journey.

Paul enjoyed a sweet and deep loving relationship with this church as is evident in this letter. The church was not without its problems and dangers, but it was a source of great joy to Paul’s heart.

These themes are highlighted in this letter: Joy, Service, Jesus Christ, The Gospel, Growing in the faith, serving side by side with other believers, and serving others over self.

## **QUESTIONS**

With the introduction to Philippians, there will only be one question for lesson one.

Spend some time examining your life to see if there is an area or areas of your life where you need to change in the power of Christ and for the glory of God. Maybe this is something that you have struggled with for a very long time, or something that has recently surfaced.

**A challenge:** Ask someone else if they see anything in you that needs to change and grow in the Lord’s power. Spouses can ask each other. Parents can ask their older children or children can ask their parents. Maybe you can ask another believer. This should be done in love and with a teachable heart. Be warned: You may not like what you hear, but you will be blessed by hearing it.

There may be something you will not be able to share with your group, but maybe there will be some areas where you could share with your group and ask for prayer that we may begin to do what Paul stresses in this letter – to stand side by side in the gospel, serving together, growing together, suffering together, being joyful together, and waiting for Jesus together.







*Chapter 2*  
More than Just a  
Greeting

Philippians 1:1-2



4. What is it that makes one type of slavery bad and the type of slavery the New Testament talks about good?

5. Answering the following questions from **Deuteronomy 7**.

a. (7:1,2) Why would God instruct His people to not make any covenant with the heathen nations they will encounter as they enter the promised land?

b. (7:3,4) What is the danger if His people marry men and women of these heathen nations?

c. (7:6) What did God choose these people to be in His eyes in this verse?

d. (7:7,8) What reason is given for God’s choosing them over all other nations?

**6.** What blessings come to your mind when you think of Jesus as your Master and you as His slave?

- a.** In the disappointments of life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b.** In a trial?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c.** When you are not sure what to do?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- d.** When you face death?

**7.** What blessings come to your mind when you think of yourself as His treasured possession?

- a.** When you are lonely?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b.** When you are hurt by another?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c.** When you sin?





*Chapter 3*  
Fellowship of the  
Gospel

Philippians 1:3-8

## **SUMMARY**

Paul is continuing to introduce his letter by expressing his deep love and appreciation to the church at Philippi for their fellowship with him in the Gospel. He is also confident that God will complete the work He began in them and his heart yearns for them because they have participated with him in the Gospel ministry.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Read **Hebrews 10:24, 25** and answer the following questions.

**24** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, **25** not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

a. The readers are challenged to think of ways in which they can stir up or stimulate other believers to love and good works. What things can you think of that will help you fulfill this verse with other believers?

b. Why is it dangerous for those who claim to know Christ to neglect being with other believers and serving alongside them?

**c.** According to these verses what is to be our main objective when we gather and serve with other believers?

**d.** Would you say that when you gather with God's people you mostly think, "What am I going to get out of this today?", or "What can I give to others today?"

**2.** What things in life tend to crowd out time and energy to fellowship with others in the Gospel?

**3.** How can you go from being a "church attendee", to actually being a person who participates in the "fellowship of the gospel?"

**4.** How does knowing God's promise of completing your salvation in Phil. 1:6:

**a.** Help you be patient with other believers who are struggling?

**b.** Help you when you think you have to do "stuff" to earn God's love?

**c.** Help you when you see your own struggles, sins, and failures?

**5.** If a believer has no desire to be with God's people, serve alongside God's people, grow alongside God's people, what might be some possible reasons for this?

**6.** What are some blessings that God gives us through other believers?





*Chapter 4*  
A Life that Exceeds  
the Ordinary

Philippians 1:9-11

## **SUMMARY**

After conveying to the church at Philippi his deep love and devotion, he now reveals his heart for them through this prayer for them that they not be satisfied with where they are in their Christian walk, but instead excel in biblical love, spiritual excellence, and a fruitful life which achieves the greatest goal of all – praise and glory to God.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Read **1 John 3:16** and answer the following questions:

a. How do we know what love is?

b. How do we reflect this love?

c. Who is this love directed to?

d. What does this type of love tell you about how God views His children's relationships with each other?

**e.** At this time in our culture we may not be called to die for a brother or sister in Christ, but in what ways can we practice the principle set forth in this verse? (See v.17, 18)

**2.** When is it easy to love other believers?

**3.** When is it harder to love other believers?

**4.** What are the dangers of loving without truth?

**5.** How does growing in biblical love help you make wise choices?

**a.** In your own life

**b.** Toward others







*Chapter 5*  
Rejoicing When the  
Gospel Advances

Philippians 1:12-18

## **SUMMARY**

The Philippian church was concerned with the condition of Paul while in prison. It seems that they may have been concerned about the status of his and their work in the gospel because of Paul's present condition. Paul informs them that his time in prison has not stopped the gospel but rather was used by God to advance the gospel message. His time in jail and even his enemies that sought to harm him could not take away his joy because the source of his joy was the gospel.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Which of the following would you say best describes your thoughts when faced with difficult and challenging life events?

- a. How am I going to get out of this?
- b. I can't believe this is happening to me.
- c. This event is hard and challenging but I will rejoice because God is in it and He is using it to advance the gospel.
- d. I just want to give up.

2. What things in your life may contribute to you not responding in a way that pleases God and keeps your joy?

3. Read **Psalm 139:7-13**. How do these verses help you to know God is working in your trial?

4. What do you think Paul meant in Phil. 1:13 when he said his imprisonment was for Christ? What truth does this teach you about a life given to serve Christ? Does this contradict some popular teachings concerning the lives of those who follow Jesus?

5. What things can you do to help you respond to difficulties to see yourself as a part of advancing the gospel rather than responding in other ways you are accustomed to?

**6.** What things compete for your joy rather than joy from the gospel moving forward?

**7.** Can you think of any times in your life where God used your trial and hardship to be a part of advancing the gospel?





*Chapter 6*  
Denying Self for the  
Converts of the  
Gospel

Philippians 1:19-26

## **SUMMARY**

To Paul, the gospel was put first above all else. He found his great rejoicing in the fact that the gospel was being preached, even among those who thought it would bring him harm. His very life was Christ and the gospel. Paul's ministry, his life, and even the possibility of losing his life to his captors all centered on the gospel. His burning desire is to go and be with Christ, which death would have immediately brought to pass. However, he would deny this great desire because the Philippians needed him in their lives for their progress and joy in the faith.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Read the following verses and then answer the question.

**2 Cor. 1:11** You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

**Romans 15:30** I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf

**Ephesians 6:18,19** Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel

**1 Thess. 5:25** Brothers, pray for us

**2 Thess. 3:1** Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you,

In the light of what Paul said in **Phil. 1:19** and these verses you just read about praying for one another, how are you doing in the ministry of prayer for others? What are your thoughts about your life of prayer for the spiritual needs of your brethren?

**2.** As a believer, how does knowing that you will be ultimately vindicated before the King even though you may be disgraced here on earth, encourage you to stand strong in the faith while you live in a world of opposition?

**3.** Do you struggle with the thought of death? Whether you answer “yes” or “no” or “sometimes”, explain your reasoning for your answer.

4. In what ways, as God's children, can we deny ourselves for the spiritual good of our brethren?





*Chapter 7*  
Side by Side in  
the Gospel

Philippians 1:27-2:4

## **SUMMARY**

Paul, up to this point, has been talking about himself, “the things concerning me” (1:12); now he turns to “the things concerning them” (1:27). His chief concern in this part of the letter is their unity in the Gospel and he stresses the importance of this by talking about unity when there are attacks from the outside and when there is dissension on the inside.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. In 1:27, why do you think Paul emphasized the point to live worthy of the gospel whether he was with them or away from them?

2. As you look at verse 27, what specific way of living does Paul say is worthy of the gospel of Christ?

3. What comes to your mind when you think of a follower of Christ “standing firm” in unity with other followers of Christ?



- 8.** What two gifts have the followers of Jesus been given as seen in verse 29?
- 9.** How can suffering for the gospel be seen as a gift?
- 10.** How does verse 30 describe the Christian's life in the gospel? Is this description different than the comfort of a "church pew" one day a week?
- 11.** Summarize briefly chapter 2 verses 2-4 concerning Paul's instructions on unity.





*Chapter 8*  
Thinking Like  
Jesus

Philippians 2:5-11



3. In Phil. 2:5, God’s people are commanded to think like Jesus:

- Why is this command plural – directed to the whole church?

- Why is it a struggle to “do” what we “know” in our mind?

- How can you strengthen yourself to think like Jesus, or does it just happen automatically?

4. What are some reasons why Paul’s thoughts were drawn to Jesus coming to earth as a man and a servant who gave His life when Paul’s main subject is unity within the church? How do those two things mesh together?

5. As you read 2:5-11, what things about Jesus life do you see? Some are listed in the text, while others are implied. Write down as many as you can.

**6.** Knowing that one day every knee will bow to Jesus and confess to Jesus that he is Lord – how should this direct your heart as you think of a rebellious world?

**7.** Examine your life compared to the example of Jesus. Where are you struggling to be in control, in charge, desiring your own way, sacrificing for others, giving up your own rights, humbling yourself, and denying yourself for the sake of unity and the gospel?





*Chapter 9*  
**A Workout Full  
of Hope**

Philippians 2:12-18

## **SUMMARY**

Paul is continuing his thought that he began in Phil. 1:27 that their life be worthy of the gospel of Christ and that they are striving side by side for the faith of the gospel. He insists that a passive Christian life is not acceptable. He affirms that the ability and even the desire to live for Christ comes from God alone (2:13), but this does not mean that the Christian does nothing to pursue godly living in this world and with fellow believers. The result will be shining as a light and holding forth the words of life to a dark and twisted generation. This passage holds forth great hope to believers that in the power of God they can change for His purposes and for His glory.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Write down the “life style” of the following people who pursue excellence in their chosen field:

a. Athlete

b. Soldier

c. Musician

2. Paul does not say in **2:12** that people must work for their salvation. Read **Romans 4:4,5**. What is Paul’s argument here to show that we do not work for our salvation?

3. Read **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** and answer the following questions:

a. How is the runner to run? (24)

b. How is the athlete described? (25a)

c. How are the awards described? (25b)

d. What point is Paul trying to get across as he talks about the runner and the boxer? (26)

e. What does mean by “disciplining his body” (27a)

f. What is Paul’s main concern or fear? (27b)

4. Read **1 Timothy 6:11,12**.

a. What is involved in fleeing?

b. What is involved in pursuing?

5. How does **Phil 2:12** and **2:13** mesh together? If our will and desire come completely from God, how then can we be commanded to work out our salvation?

6. In light of this passage, what would you say to someone who says “I can’t change?”

7. How would you rate yourself in your diligence to pursue Christlike-ness as commanded in **Phil. 2:12**?



Chapter 10

# Living Examples of Thinking Like Jesus

Philippians 2:19-30



**4.** It is easy to put on a “mask and costume” to hide what is really going on with us on the inside.

**a.** Why do we do this?

**b.** What’s the result if we continue to do this?

**c.** What’s the result if we learn that we need others and we seek their help and as a result take off our masks?

**d.** Which best describes you?

•“I don’t need anyone”

•“No one needs me – I have nothing to offer.”

•“Someone needs me” I look for those people!

5. Read **Philippians 2:29**. What kind of people should be our heroes?

6. Why was Paul heartbroken in **Philippians 2:21**? What do you think he meant by this sad statement?

7. In what ways can you practically apply the examples in this text of Timothy and Epaphroditus?





*Chapter II*  
**Joy is Jesus Plus  
Nothing**  
part 1

Philippians 3:1-6



e. What things must be in place in your life and your thinking in order to obey this command?

f. **Galatians 5:22** tells us that joy is the fruit of the Spirit. How does our obeying to rejoice and the Spirit's producing joy work together?

2. Read **Psalms 16:11**. "You make known to me the path of life, in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

If you were walking down a path and looking for joy and saw different signs advertising joy such as: "Pleasure", "Ease of Life", "Lusts Fulfilled", "Wealth and Prosperity". What do you see in **Psalms 16:11** that would lead you to reject all of these other invitations to joy?

**3.** Paul has warned the Philippians to beware of false teaching that adds anything to Jesus. What things do you see in our culture that people add to Jesus for their salvation?

**4.** Why is Satan so successful with the lie that people can earn righteousness by what they do – that Jesus is not enough? What is in the human heart that is drawn to this lie rather than on the Gospel of Jesus alone?

**5.** Would you say that you struggle with trying to earn God's love by the works that you do? Have you begun by the Spirit but yet you have reverted to a performance oriented Christian walk?

**6.** Is there anything in your past that causes you great struggle in accepting grace from God to forgive you and you feel like you can never do enough?



Chapter 12  
**Joy is Jesus Plus  
Nothing**  
part 2

Philippians 3:7-11

## **SUMMARY**

The source of true lasting joy is Jesus Christ. Salvation comes only through Jesus Christ plus nothing. After sharing the great truth of the righteousness of Jesus being given to those who believe apart from any work or human effort, he now turns to his great desire of knowing Jesus and pursuing Him above all else. Jesus is the source of joy and the treasure of Paul's life as a believer who possesses the righteousness of Christ.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What comes to your mind when you think of the word "treasure"? How does that word related to our pursuit of knowing Jesus?

2. Take an examination and inventory of your time during a normal week. There are 168 hours in each week. I have listed some below based on a normal average. The design of this is not to be perfectly accurate down to the last second, but to give us an idea of how we spend our time, and to evaluate that in order to make changes in our pursuit to know Jesus.

After you are finished, write down some conclusions that you have observed.

Work – 40 hrs. (128 hrs. remain)  
Sleep – 49 hrs. (79 hrs. remain)  
Church – 2 hrs. (77 hrs. remain)  
Comm. Group – 2 hrs. (75 hrs. remain)  
(Follow the same pattern as above)  
Scripture Reading –

Prayer –

Bible Study –

Serving Others –

Household Responsibilities –

Exercise –

T.V. –

Computer – (Facebook, etc.) –

(List any other significant activities that you may be involved in)

Other –

Other –

Other –

Other-

Other –

Other –

Other -

What has this shown you concerning your pursuit of knowing Jesus?

What are your conclusions?

3. Can you think of anything in your life, that if God were to take it away, your heart toward God might change?

4. When you suffer for Jesus or go through any kind of suffering, would you say your normal response is, “Lord, don’t let me waste this suffering so that I may be more like you”, or, “I wish this was never in my life” (or some response that is similar to that)?

5. After hearing the message and going through this study would you say your Christian walk resembles just checking off certain boxes (went to church, read my Bible, etc..) or actually pursuing knowing Jesus?





*Chapter 13*  
**Are We There Yet?**

Philippians 3:12-16

## **SUMMARY**

Paul wanted the Philippians to know that though he had received the righteousness of Jesus and his heart desire was to know Jesus, he had yet to arrive where he wanted to be in his relationship with Christ. He desires for them to know that once a person is made alive in Christ they still must pursue Christ. This pursuit is not in order to be saved but rather because of what Jesus did in saving them. This lifelong pursuit will not end until he is with Jesus in glory. The Philippians must guard against any teaching of spiritual perfectionism and continue to grow in their faith exercising patience with other believers in the church who had yet to grasp this great truth.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Do you find it easier to see faults in other people more than faults in your own life? Do you even get a little angry when you see the faults of others, but give yourself grace? If so, why might you do this?

2. Do you ever grow frustrated at the spiritual growth of others? (Example: your children, your spouse, fellow church members, etc..)



**6.** Why is a humble attitude possessed by every believer in the church whereby they know they have not arrived so important to the life of the church?

**7.** What dangers occur in a church or in a church's leadership when the above attitude is not understood and practiced?

**8.** What is the danger of living in the past for a servant of God?

**a.** In remembering the things I used to do serving God but no longer do.

**b.** In remembering things in my past that I am ashamed of.

**9.** Why is this passage such a blessing and an encouragement even though it tells us we will never get to where we want to be while on this earth?



*Chapter 14*  
This World is Not  
My Home

Philippians 3:17-4:1

## **SUMMARY**

Paul is concerned that the Philippian believers will be heavily influenced by the world as opposed to being influenced by those who walk with Christ. The danger is setting your mind on earthly things which only ends in destruction rather than setting your mind on the prize which is guaranteed by the return of Christ. He gives instruction in these verses how a child of God can protect themselves from the evil influences of this world which truly proves they are indeed children of God. Some have proven otherwise which brought Paul to tears. His protective directives can be summed up as follows as he sticks with his theme of running the race by forgetting, straining, and reaching ahead towards the prize.

- Keep your eye on believers who are running the race.
- Running down the wrong path leads to destruction.
- You're running because you don't belong here.
- Never stop running.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What things should be a part of your life in order to be around believers who are walking faithfully with God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Why is not wanting to be around God's people a sign that something is wrong spiritually?

3. How can you avoid worshipping someone that you look to as a spiritual example?

4. How does **2 Corinthians 4:18** differ from what Paul described in **Philippians 3:18, 19**?

5. How would you answer this question if an unbeliever asked you: “How can your God tell you not to set your mind on earthly things when you live here on earth and you have responsibilities here on earth?”

**6.** Look up the following verses and answer what they tell you about heaven:

**a. Luke 10:20**

**b. 1 Thess. 4:16**

**c. Hebrews 12:23 & 1 Thess. 4:14**

**d. 1 Peter 1:4**

**e. Matthew 5:2**

**f. Matthew 6:20**

**7.** Take a few minutes in your group and talk about the joys of anticipating the return of Jesus and an eternity with Him in heaven.

**8.** In **Philippians 4:1** Paul tells the church at Philippi to stand firm and persevere. Why is there a need for this command?



*Chapter 15*  
Peace Can Be  
Yours

Philippians 4:2-9

## **SUMMARY**

Paul is beginning to wind down his letter and he includes these short statements of practical Gospel living. In verses 2-9 these short but powerful statements seemed to be tied in to the subject of peace. This lesson is an introduction to the specific verses that we will study in future lessons. In this lesson we will focus on the difference between peace with God and the peace of God.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Read **Romans 5:1,2**. How does one have peace with God?

2. Read **Romans 5:6-10**. Write down the four descriptive words that Paul uses to describe people who are separated from God.

(6) \_\_\_\_\_

(6) \_\_\_\_\_

(8) \_\_\_\_\_

(10) \_\_\_\_\_



7. Have you ever thought (or maybe think right now) that the promise in **Phil.4:8** didn't apply to you, that perhaps, something was so big in your life that peace simply was not available? If so, would you be willing to share with your group?

8. Can a person who is not experiencing peace fulfill what Paul desired for the Philippian church in **Phil. 1:27**? Why or why not?

9. In this introduction to this section in Philippians, it would be good to examine our hearts and come to grips with where we really are when it comes to having peace with God and having the peace of God.

Spend some time in your group sharing with each other what God has shown you and exposed to you concerning this topic of peace in your life.

Be sure to approach the next sermons and lessons with a teachable spirit and a desire to bring glory to God as you walk in the Gospel side by side with other believers





Chapter 16  
Right  
Relationships

Philippians 4:2,3

## **SUMMARY**

Paul knew the importance of having right relationships within the church in times of peace and especially in times of persecution. If right relationships don't exist the church will not stand side by side together for the faith of the gospel (1:27), and will also not experience the supernatural peace of God in the midst of great trials (4:9).

In our passage today, Paul urges two ladies to agree in the Lord. This agreeing in the Lord refers back to the principles found in chapter 2 verses 1-5. He also enlists the help of a godly man in the church to assist these ladies in their struggle.

A self-centered church will not be progressing in the joy of their faith and they also will not be standing side by side together for the faith of the gospel, and they will not be experiencing peace in the battle.

### **Philippians 4:2,3**

“I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I as you also true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.”

## **QUESTIONS**

1. In what ways can relationship problems in a church take away peace? How does it affect you and how does it affect the body as a whole?

2. Read **Romans 12:18**. In relationships, can you control the other person? In relationships, what does God call you to do?

3. Read **James 3:5-6**. What is the weapon James refers to as being small but deadly?

4. Look up the following verses and write down what they say concerning the tongue or about relationships.

**Ephesians 4:32** –

**Psalms 141:3** –

**Proverbs 15:1** –

**Proverbs 18:13 –**

**Proverbs 29:11 –**

5. What has been impressed upon your heart related to the verses above? Has God exposed an area of weakness related to your tongue?

6. Think of what life may be like if here in the United States the church of Jesus Christ faced great persecution and suffering. Then, answer the following questions: (You may not have enough room to write down your answers, but come prepared to share your thoughts)

a. Describe what the culture may be like in general.

b. What are some things that seem so important to us now as a church, but may not be so important while experiencing great persecution.

**c.** Describe how right relationships in the church family will be needed in times of persecution. In other words, how will believers be interacting with one another in times of great suffering and threats from the powers that are in control? How will this be related to “peace”?



Chapter 17  
God's Counsel  
for Peace  
part 1

Philippians 4:4-7

## **SUMMARY**

Paul is continuing his heart felt instruction to the Philippian believers in the time of persecution and suffering so that they may experience the peace of God, continue to progress in the joy of their faith, and advance the Gospel side by side even in the hardest times of life.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Look up the following verses and write down what they say about rejoicing.

a. **Psalm 5:11**

b. **Psalm 16:7-9**

c. **Psalm 119:14-16**

d. **Habakkuk 3:17,18**

2. Read **Psalm 37:4**. What is the only way to get everything you desire?

3. How does **Psalm 37:16** confirm that **Psalm 37:4** is not talking about desiring and living in super abundance of things and possessions?

4. What does **Psalm 37:31** say about what must be a part of the person's heart in order to desire the right things?

5. Read **Romans 8:28**. How does knowing that God is in control of all things in your life help you to rejoice and desire what He wants for you?

6. Is there anything in your life that God has given to you that you have struggled with as being a part of God's plan? In other words, have you ever not wanted what God has given? (Examine your past as well as your present)

**7.** In what ways does a gentle spirit:

**a.** Encourage believers in times of hardship?

**b.** Help shine the light of the gospel in a dark world?

**8.** Do you struggle with the fact that God commands His children to “not worry”? Have you believed this is “impossible”? If so, what does that say about your heart toward God?

**9.** How does God's open invitation to pray show you God's love for you?

**10.** How can you pray with thanksgiving when facing great trials or persecution?

**11.** Is there anything you struggle with related to worrying that you would share with your group for prayer and encouragement?



*Chapter 18*  
God's Counsel  
for Peace  
part 2

Philippians 4:8,9

## **SUMMARY**

Paul is continuing his heart felt instruction to the Philippian believers in the time of persecution and suffering so that they may experience the peace of God, continue to progress in the joy of their faith, and advance the Gospel side by side even in the hardest times of life. In these verses he focuses on the importance of thinking and practicing what has been learned.

## **QUESTIONS**

*True:* True in fact; undeniable reality

*Honorable:* To revere or to be in awe. Serious, dignified; deeply respected

*Right:* Righteous; approved by God; upright

*Pure:* Holy; uncontaminated; not mixed with guilt; free from defilement

*Lovely:* Pleasing; acceptable; dearly prized; worthy of personal affection

*Commendable:* Well reported of or well-spoken of; deserving praise

*Excellence:* virtue; moral excellence, perfection

*Worthy of Praise:* Something that deserves praise because it relates to God's will

**Using the above list as a guideline, answer the following questions:**

1. Fearful thinking is dwelling on what might happen. What type of thinking will replace fearful thinking?



5. What habits or practices must be a part of your life if you are to fill your mind with God's way of thinking?

6. Why does Paul say "practice these things continually", as opposed to just making a one-time decision?

7. Why is it so important to concentrate on your inner person as opposed to your outer person? (See **Luke 6:45**)

**8.** What is the promise of **verse 9** if we truly practice these things in Philippians 4? If we don't have peace, what conclusion can we make about our lives?



*Chapter 19*  
Learning  
Contentment

Philippians 4:10-23

## **SUMMARY**

Through having little or much Paul has learned contentment and is believing that Christ is empowering him to do whatever He is asking him to do in any and every situation.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Complaining is often a sin that occurs when we are not content. Answer the following questions as you read **Numbers chapter 11**.

- a. What sin were the people committing? (1)
  
- b. What was God's response? (1)
  
- c. Instead of complaining now, what did the people do? (2)
  
- d. Who influenced God's people to be discontent? (4)
  
- e. What were these people doing? (4)
  
- f. What did God's people do again? (4)
  
- g. What did God's people want? (4)

- h.** What was going on in the mind of God's people as they were complaining and discontent with their present situation? (5)
- i.** What did their statement in verse 6 reveal about their heart towards God?
- j.** What was the response of God at the discontentment and complaining of God's people? (10)
- k.** Who were the people truly rejecting by their discontentment and complaining? (20)
- l.** As you look at what happened in **verses 31-34**, would you say that God gave them what they wanted but He used what they wanted as a judgment against their sin?
- 2.** Answer the following questions based on what we learned from the passage in **Numbers 11**.
- a.** When we complain about our misfortunes, what does that reveal about how we view God?

**b.** Can you identify anyone in your life that influences you to complain and be discontent? If so who? Why are so easily influenced?

**c.** When you are discontent, why is it easy to remember the past and long for the past?

**d.** Why is being discontent and complaining really rejecting the Lord?

**3. Psalm 73** could be used as a summary of Paul's words to the Philipians in chapter 4. Read **Psalm 73:25,26**. What in these verses supports what Paul is saying about contentment in Phil. 4?

**25** Whom have I in heaven but you?

And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

**26** My flesh and my heart may fail,

but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Discuss with your group where your heart is in relation to these verses and also in relation to Philippians 4.

## **PRAYER NEEDS**

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