

Philippians

01 – Introduction

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Background

Acts 16:9-13 *And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. 11 Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day came to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days. NKJV*

Paul saw a vision with a man from **Macedonia** pleading with him to come to and preach to the people in that region.

The first city in Macedonia where Paul preached was Philippi.

The timing of this visit was around **50 AD**, fifteen years after his conversion in 35 AD. (All dates are approximate)

Acts 16:13-15 *And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there. 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us. NKJV*

The first recorded convert in Philippi was **Lydia**, a seller of purple, who was praying by the riverside. After she was **baptized** she begged Paul and his companions to stay at her house. Paul agreed.

Acts 16:16-24 *Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. 17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour. 19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. 20 And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; 21 and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe." 22 Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. 24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. NKJV*

Paul and Silas were **beaten** and thrown in prison after casting an evil spirit out of a young girl who was being used by some men to make a profit through fortune-telling.

Acts 16:25-34 *But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. 27 And the*

keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. 28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." 29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. 34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household. NKJV

The chief jailer was so impressed that Paul and Silas voluntarily remained in prison, even after an earthquake gave them the opportunity to escape, he asked them what he needed to do to be **saved**. Paul told him that he and his household needed to **believe** on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved. He and his family believed and were immediately **baptized**.

2 Cor 11:22-29 *Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? — I speak as a fool — I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness — 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?* NKJV

Paul writes the letter of 2 Corinthians in **56** AD, six years after visiting Philippi and 5-6 years before writing the Philippian letter. Sufficient to say, Paul has had a **difficult** journey as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Acts 9:13-16 *Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." NKJV*

The fact that Paul was going to suffer **many** things for the name of Jesus Christ was communicated to Paul when he was converted to Him.

Acts 28:16 *Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him. ... 30 Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.*

Paul was in a Roman prison, **unsure** of his future on this earth, when he wrote the book of Philippians.

Phil 1:27-30 *Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same conflict which you saw in me*

and now hear is in me. NKJV

Paul did not suffer alone. The Philippians were also suffering for **Christ**.

Themes

Joy

Philippians 1:4 *always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with **joy**.*

Philippians 1:18 *What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I **rejoice**, yes, and will **rejoice**. NKJV*

Philippians 1:25 *And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and **joy** of faith, 26 that your **rejoicing** for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again. NKJV*

Philippians 2:2 *fulfill my **joy** by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. NKJV*

Philippians 2:16 *holding fast the word of life, so that I may **rejoice** in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. 17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am **glad** and **rejoice** with you all. 18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.*

Philippians 2:28 *Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may **rejoice**, and I may be less sorrowful. NKJV*

Phil 3:1-3 *Finally, my brethren, **rejoice** in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, **rejoice** in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh... NKJV*

Philippians 4:1 *Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my **joy** and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. NKJV*

Philippians 4:4 ***Rejoice** in the Lord always. Again I will say, **rejoice!** NKJV*

Paul joyfully made **request** for them in prayer.

They were all to rejoice in the **Lord**.

They rejoiced at the thought of being **united** again with people they loved.

The Philippians were a great **source** of joy for Paul.

Thankfulness

Phil 1:3-5 *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. NKJV*

Phil 4:10-16 *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. ... 14 Nevertheless you have done well that you*

shared in my distress. 15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. NKJV

Paul was thankful that the Philippians had **fellowship** with him in the Gospel since Lydia accepted the good news of Jesus Christ and was baptized.

Phil 4:6-7 *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. NKJV*

Paul told the Philippians to be thankful when making their **requests** known to God.

Unity

Phil 2:1-4 *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being **like-minded**, having the **same** love, being of **one accord**, of **one mind**. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. NKJV*

Christian unity was important to Paul because it is important to **God**.

Looking Forward

As we study the book of Philippians together we will learn:

- How to be joyful in the middle of persecution and suffering.
- How to be thankful in everything.
- How a group of people with great differences can be united in Christ.
- How to eliminate the things that hinder our unity and peace.