



PRECEPT
UPON
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English Standard Version

Philippians

HOW TO HAVE JOY

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English Standard Version

PHILIPPIANS
HOW TO HAVE JOY

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—English Standard Version

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2013

Greek Word Study Tools

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

WALVOORD, JOHN F., ZUCK, ROY B., eds.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures

Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985

KENT, JR., HOMER A.; VAUGHN, CURTIS; AND RUPPRECHT, ARTHUR A.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996

MARTIN, RALPH P.

Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Philippians

Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987

WALVOORD, JOHN R.

Everyman's Bible Commentary: Philippians: Triumph in Christ

Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1971

MELICK, RICHARD R., JR.

The New American Commentary: Vol. 32—Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 1991

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

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Philippians
Lesson 1, Overview

LESSON ONE Overview

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES Observation Worksheets on Philippians, located in the Appendix

Philippians—a wellspring of spiritual truths that has brought countless believers new joy and peace in their daily walk. You will find Philippians a beautiful and a profitable book. It contains many principles of life that will literally transform your attitude toward people and circumstances as you become a doer of those things which you are about to learn in the next nine weeks.

You need to discipline yourself to study daily rather than cramming all your study into one sitting. To understand God’s truth there must be meditation and prayer. Joshua 1:8 says that we should meditate on God’s Word night and day so that we may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then we will make our way prosperous, and then we will have success. You may get right answers in one “cramming” session, but in all probability, you will miss many precious jewels of insight that come only through prayerful meditation.

DAY ONE

Inductive Bible study begins with the Bible itself. It is finding out what the Bible says. However, all the good study habits and methods in the world will mean very little to the student of God’s Word apart from the revelation of the Holy Spirit. John 14:26; John 16:13; and 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 teach us that it is the work of the indwelling Spirit to reveal and to guide us into all truth. So always begin with prayer, Beloved, asking God to guide you into His truth (John 16:13).

1. If you have never done a Precept course before, it might be helpful to read the chapters entitled “The Rule of Context—Context Rules!” and “Getting the Big Picture” in *How to Study Your Bible*.

The purpose of this first lesson is to discover the context of the book of Philippians. This lesson lays the foundation for all the other lessons. Since context rules interpretation and Scripture must always be interpreted in light of its context, the first step in your study of a letter (epistle) is to begin with the **Overview** (the view of the entire book) to discover the context.



Since Philippians is a letter, the place to begin your study is with the author because he is the first person mentioned in this book. Therefore, the first step in our study will be to identify what the book tells you about the author. Then as you evaluate these facts, you will begin to see the context of Philippians unfold right before your eyes. It's exciting and you are going to be awed by what you see.

2. Now let's begin. Read Philippians and mark in blue each mention of the author's name and the pronouns that refer specifically to him, such as *I*, *me*, *my*.

You can use the Observation Worksheets, located in the Appendix, for assignments. These Observation Worksheets are just what they say—worksheets. They contain the text of Philippians from the New American Standard Bible printed double-spaced. We encourage you to use these and then transfer the most important things to your Bible.¹

3. Now look at the places where you marked Paul in the text, and make a list of what Philippians says about him. Use the chart “The Author and Recipients of Philippians” at the end of this lesson to note what each chapter says about him. List only information about the author, not any instructions or commands. Do this before going on to number 4.
4. Although Philippians 1:1 opens with “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints . . . ,” did you observe from the rest of the letter that the author was only one of them: Paul? If this is not clear, read Philippians 2:19 and remember that singular pronouns are used throughout the book.
5. On the chart entitled “Philippians at a Glance,” located at the end of the lesson, note anything you observe about the times in which this book is written. This helps you understand the **historical setting** of the book of Philippians.

As you continue to observe Philippians, you will glean more information that will help you complete this **At a Glance** chart.

Have you ever felt like you were in a prison of sorts, dear friend? Remember, not all prisons have bars and locked doors. Or maybe you have actually been in prison. When you look at Paul, who was in a very real prison, what does he exemplify? Do you think Paul's attitude was unique, or do you think it's possible for any believer to have this attitude no matter his or her prison? Can God work this attitude in all of us? Do you think Philippians tells us how? Think about it as you study this “freeing” letter.

¹ *The New Inductive Study Bible* is ideal for this. It is the best study Bible on the market because it doesn't tell you what the text means. Rather, it gives you instructions for studying each book of the Bible.



DAY
TWO

Today we'll continue to look at Philippians as a whole. Our study will still be focused on the people mentioned in the book because the people are easy to see.

1. Read all of Philippians and mark on your Observation Worksheets every mention of the **recipients** with orange. The recipients are the people who received this letter. Be sure to mark all of the pronouns for the recipients, such as *you, your, yourselves, who, whom*, and any synonyms, like *brothers* and *beloved*.
2. As you did yesterday for the author, list the facts (not instructions) you observe about the Philippians on the chart "The Author and Recipients of Philippians."
3. Did you observe anything about the Philippians relating to the historical setting (the times in which this letter was written) that needs to be added to that section of your "Philippians at a Glance" chart? If so, add it.

By marking the text and answering some **5 Ws and H** (who, what, when, where, why, how) kinds of questions about the author and the recipients, you have been able to discover certain facts about the historical setting of this book.

Do you realize what has just happened? So many times people think the only way to understand the historical setting of a book is to read commentaries, but they aren't aware that careful observation of the text can reveal this to you.

What a blessing this is for people who speak other languages who do not have commentaries in their language or easy access to them if they do exist.

4. What did the recipients do that might have prompted Paul to write this letter to them? Write your answer below.

How are you doing, dear friend? If this is your first Precept course, you may be panting at the pace and the work, but don't be discouraged. You are laying such a critical foundation, one that you'll be proud of in the right sense of the word. If you persevere, you'll find yourself building a mansion of joy that you can dwell in no matter what your circumstances, and it will be more than worth the discipline you have exercised. So press on, valiant one.



DAY
THREE
AND
DAY
FOUR

As you have probably observed, *Christ*, *rejoice/joy*, *mind/think* and their synonyms are used throughout Philippians. (A synonym is a word that has the same meaning as another word within a particular context.) Therefore, these are **key words** for this book.

Discovering key words is vital to your understanding of the meaning of a text. Like keys, key words “unlock” what a passage of Scripture is about. Observing key words and phrases is important because they help identify the author’s repeated emphasis and how he accomplishes his purpose for writing.

It will be helpful to make a **Key Word Bookmark** for Philippians. You might use the one on the back of your Precept book which has suggestions for marking frequently used words such as “Christ.” Write *Christ*, *joy/rejoice*, and *mind/ think* on the blank side and mark each of these the way you want to mark them on your Observation Worksheets. You’ll add other key words as you continue to study.

1. Read Philippians and mark the key words *Christ* and *rejoice/joy*, along with their synonyms and pronouns.
2. Read Philippians again and mark *mind/ think*.
3. On the page “Key Words in Philippians” at the end of this lesson, list what Paul says about *rejoice/joy* and what he says about *mind/attitude*. As you make your lists, be sure to note what is said regarding these key words in relation to *Christ*.
4. Record these key words on the “Philippians at a Glance” chart.

By the way, have you ever heard someone say, “The joy of the Lord is my strength”? Did you wonder what he or she was talking about? By the end of this study of Philippians you will not only know the answer but we pray you’ll be saying it yourself.

5. Did you notice any other key words (with their synonyms) repeated in all four chapters? If you noticed any key repeated words and their synonyms, record these below. Then read Philippians and mark the other key words you observed.
6. Read through Philippians to see what the author talks about the most. Pay attention to the key words you’ve marked.



7. In Philippians the key words *Christ* and *rejoice* are the main subjects or **themes** of the book. The theme of a book is the main subject(s) or topic(s) in the book.
 - a. Use words from the text to summarize the main themes of *Christ* and *rejoice/joy*. You might look at your list on these key words to see any possibilities. Consider the following:
 - 1) The theme should be based on an objective evaluation of what the author emphasizes through repetition, not just a subjective leaning toward what ministered the most to you.
 - 2) You do not have to “come up” with the theme. It should always be based on repetition in the book and its context.
 - b. Record the theme of Philippians in the appropriate location at the top of your “Philippians at a Glance” chart. When you have completed your chart, you will have a wonderful visual tool that will give you the main content of Philippians on one concise chart.

DAY FIVE

Part of the beauty of inductive Bible study is to look at what you have discovered out of only one source: God’s Word. Later in this study you may read some commentaries to check your work and to see what other people say. It will be exciting to see what you discovered all by yourself with just the Word, the Holy Spirit, and you.

1. For the last four days you have evaluated Philippians as a whole, and we rejoice over you. Our task today will be to look at the four chapters to observe how each chapter relates to the whole letter. So the next step is to identify the chapter theme for each chapter.
 - a. Read only chapter 1, looking for the theme of that chapter.

What is the chapter about? Use words from the text.

When you have identified the chapter theme, write it in the space for chapter 1 on your “Philippians at a Glance” chart.
 - b. Following the same process, read chapters 2–4 and identify the theme of each chapter. Then write each in the appropriate space on the At a Glance chart.



- c. Fill in any other information you learned from this week's study to complete the "Philippians at a Glance" chart.
2. Philippians has so much to teach us about the relationship believers have with the Lord Jesus Christ. As you study it, Beloved, make sure you have this relationship. Did you find your heart touched with a longing for a deeper intimacy that provokes the same words as Paul's when he said, "For to me to live is Christ"?

Think about what God has taught you this week from your study of His Word. Ponder these things in your heart as you go about your day and turn it into an occasion for prayer.

Thank you, dear one, for your diligence in study this week. May our Lord reward you greatly by giving you great wisdom and understanding.



THE AUTHOR AND RECIPIENTS OF PHILIPPIANS

Author	Recipients



THE AUTHOR AND RECIPIENTS OF PHILIPPIANS

Author

Recipients



KEY WORDS IN PHILIPPIANS



PHILIPPIANS AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Chapter Theme:

Author:

1

Date:

2

Key Words:

3

Purpose:

4

Historical Setting:



PHILIPPIANS 1

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

PAUL and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

- 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,
- 4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy,
- 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.
- 6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.
- 7 It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.
- 8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.
- 9 And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,
- 10 so that you may approve what is excellent, and so 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 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,



- 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.
- 14 And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.
- 15 Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will.
- 16 The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.
- 17 The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.
- 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.
Yes, and I will rejoice,
- 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance,
- 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored 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 live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.
- 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.
- 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.
- 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,



- 26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.
- 27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,
- 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.
- 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,
- 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.



PHILIPPIANS 2

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

- SO if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,
- 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.
 - 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.
 - 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.
 - 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,
 - 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,
 - 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.
 - 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
 - 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
 - 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 - 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



- 12** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,
- 13** for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
- 14** Do all things without grumbling or disputing,
- 15** that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,
- 16** holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.
- 17** Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.
- 18** Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.
- 19** I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you.
- 20** For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.
- 21** For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.
- 22** But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.
- 23** I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me,
- 24** and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.
- 25** I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need,



- 26 for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill.
- 27 Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.
- 28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious.
- 29 So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men,
- 30 for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.



PHILIPPIANS 3

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

FINALLY, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

- 2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.
- 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—
- 4 though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for 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; as to the law, a Pharisee;
- 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.
- 7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.
- 8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order 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 comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—
- 10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
- 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.



- 12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.
- 13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,
- 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- 15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.
- 16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.
- 17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.
- 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.
- 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.
- 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,
- 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.



PHILIPPIANS 4

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THEREFORE, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown,
stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

- 2** I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.
- 3** Yes, I ask 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.
- 4** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.
- 5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;
- 6** do not be anxious about anything, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus.
- 8** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.
- 9** What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.
- 10** I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.



- 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.
- 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.
- 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
- 14** Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.
- 15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.
- 16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again.
- 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.
- 18 I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.
- 19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
- 20 To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.
- 21** Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.
- 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.
- 23** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.