

PHILIPPIANS

The Epistle of

Joy



Old Testament Reading – Nehemiah 8:1-11

New Testament Reading – 1 Peter 1:3-12

The Epistle Of Joy

“To the Glory and Praise of God”

Philippians 1:1-2, Acts 16:1-40

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

The Epistle to the Philippians was written by the Apostle Paul from his prison cell in Rome in 62 A.D.

- Of the four Prison Epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, Philippians was the last one Paul wrote.
- Fearing his execution was near, Paul wanted his followers to know how much he appreciated their financial support, and assure them that he planned to visit with them again when he was released from prison.
- However, Paul said he welcomed death if it would, in any way, enhance the spread of the gospel.
- Paul exhorted his readers to remain steadfast in their faith, and to follow him as he followed Christ, who **“emptied Himself,”** of the power and glory of His heavenly position, and then submitted Himself unto the Father’s will, by becoming **“obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”**

The Servants:

- **The Apostle Paul** – the man Jesus converted on the Damascus Road, and commissioned to get the gospel to the Gentiles. God used Paul to write 13 of the New Testament epistles.
- **Timothy** – the young man Paul met in Lystra who was so spiritual mature he invited him to join the mission team. Paul loved this young man who had been saturated in the scriptures by his mother and grandmother. Although he was not a Jew, Timothy agreed to be circumcised not to offend the Jews.
- **Priscilla and Aquila** – the married couple that assisted Paul by making and selling tents to help finance the journey.
- **Silas** – the man who traveled with Paul on his first missionary journey; a godly man, and a faithful man in whom Paul could trust.
- **Luke** – the gospel writer who remained with Paul even to the day Paul was beheaded.
- Paul said they all were **bondservants**, slaves who loved their master so much they willingly became his servants for life. Their owners pierced their ears with an awl to show their submission to servitude.

A BONDSERVANT

- A bondservant is a slave who is subservient to, and entirely at the disposal of, his master. In the New Testament, a bondservant was a person who was absolutely devoted to Jesus.
- Paul, Timothy, James, Peter, and Jude, all describe themselves as “bondservants of Christ” (Romans 1:1; Philippians 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1:1, NKJV).
- Believers today should be considered as bondservants of Christ (1 Corinthians 7:22; Ephesians 6:6; 2 Timothy 2:24), for He is our Lord, and our allegiance is due to Him alone.
- As bondservants, we renounce other masters (Matthew 6:24) and give ourselves totally to Him (Matthew 16:24).

"My Ears You Have Pierced"

Psa 40:6

"But if the servant declares, 'I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,' then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life."

Ex 21:5-6



The Saints – The word “saint” means those who are saved, i.e., sanctified and set apart for God’s use.

Bishops and Deacons – since Paul had left, the church had grown numerically and spiritually, for they had elected spiritual leaders.

Salutation:

- ***“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” “Charis,” and “Shalom,” – I wish you grace, I wish you peace!***
- Philippians is the only epistle Paul wrote to a church that did not have a theological, doctrinal, or moral problem.
- Paul wrote it to express his appreciation and affection for the gracious generosity of the believers at Philippi. In effect, the Apostle Paul said: ***“Yes, I’m in prison, but I’m still rejoicing over your goodness to me.”***

TRUE JOY

“True joy is a gift from God to those who set their hope and put their trust in God alone. True joy is produced in them by the Holy Spirit who indwells them, because of their willingness to obey God, even when their obedience includes suffering and possibly death.”

Dr. John MacArthur

**Acts 16 is the background
for Paul’s letter to the Philippians**



TIMOTHY JOINS PAUL AND SILAS (1-5)

- Paul and Silas traveled to Derbe and Lystra, where they met Timothy, a young man who had been saturated in the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother.
- Paul was so impressed with Timothy that he invited him to join him on his mission tour. Timothy was so spiritually mature that he was willing to be circumcized to not offend the Jews.

TIMOTHY'S FIRST MISSION (4-5)

- Paul and Silas delivered the decrees from Jerusalem to the churches in Derbe and Lystra. The churches were strengthened, and the number of converts increased daily.

THE MACEDONIA CALL (6-10)

- Having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel in Asia or Bithynia, Paul and his team by passed Mysia and sailed on to Troas.

CALLED BY A VISION (9-10)

- Having received a vision in the night of a man from Macedonia asking for help, Paul and his companions concluded that God wanted them to go to Macedonia, where Luke joined the team.

CONVERSIONS AT PHILIPPI (11-40)

THE CONVERSION OF LYDIA (11-15)

- Paul and the team sailed from Troas to Samothrace, Neapolis, and finally to Philippi of Macedonia, a Roman colony.

- Not having a synagogue in which to worship, Paul and his team met with some women who were gathered by the river to pray.
- After hearing Paul speak, the Lord opened Lydia's heart to receive the gospel. She and her household were baptized and invited Paul and his team to her home.
- This was the first church to be started in the Roman Colony of Philippi and the first city in Europe to be evangelized – i.e., **this is where the evangelical church in Europe began.**

THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER (16-40)

- A young slave girl, possessed with a spirit of divination, began following Paul and his team, declaring them as true servants of God who were proclaiming the only way to salvation.
- Even though what she said was true, Paul knew her testimony was not of the Lord, so he cast the evil spirit from her.
- The men who were making money from her fortunetelling brought Paul and Silas before the magistrates, and accused them as troublemakers and of teaching unlawful customs.
- Paul and Silas were beaten with rods and imprisoned in stocks.
- At midnight, Paul and Silas began praying and singing hymns, and an earthquake occurred that was so great it opened the prison doors and broke the stock's chains.
- Knowing he would be executed for losing his prisoners, the jailer prepared to kill himself, but Paul assured him that the prisoners were still there.
- Seeing their love for him, the jailer asked Paul and Silas what he must do to be saved, and they told him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and he would be saved. Later, they took him aside and explained the scriptures to him.
- The jailer and his family received Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and after they were baptized, they fed Paul and Silas and did what they could to treat their wounds.
- Knowing he and Silas had been mistreated as Roman citizens, Paul demanded the magistrates come and tell them of their freedom, and they returned to Lydia's house and encouraged the brethren.

***“Only the Holy Spirit
can give the true believer
supernatural joy.”***

- The Greek word for “joy” is chara, derived from the word charis, which is the Greek word for grace.
- Therefore, (“joy”) is produced by the charis (“grace”) of God.
- Happiness is based on human circumstances. Therefore, the best this sinful world has to offer anyone is temporary happiness.
- **However, when a sinner receives Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit quickens our human spirit, and floods our soul with joy – real joy, wonderful joy, unexplainable and everlasting joy.**
- Therefore, when our lives become difficult, and the devil's “joy robbers” surround us, the Holy Spirit, who resides within us, rises to defy that devilish pressure by filling us with joy unspeakable and full of glory.
- Therefore, true joy is God's supernatural response to the devil's attacks.

- When we rejoice through suffering rather than sulking in it, God can use us to impact people in ways we may never understand on this side of heaven.

***“You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”***

Psalm 16:11