

INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS

THEME VERSE: Philippians 4:4 - "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice."

WHO:

Paul-
Apostle of Jesus Christ (Acts 9)

The Church at Philippi-
Paul planted this church during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:12-40)

WHERE/WHEN:

- Paul most likely wrote this letter to the Philippians when he was imprisoned in Rome in AD 60-62 (1:12-14)
- Philippi, a Greek city in the region of Macedonia, was the first town where Paul established a church

WHY:

- To inform them about his circumstances at Rome (1:12-26)
- To exhort them to unity (2:1-2; 4:2)
- To explain why he sent Epaphroditus to them (2:25-27)
- To warn against false teachers (3:1-4:1)
- To thank the Philippians for their gift (4:10-18)

For us today - Paul shares a real example of how to find joy in every circumstance (4:4-7)

NO MATTER WHAT

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-11



Head



Heart



Hands

Why is it crucial to view yourself as a saint? What if you aren't perfect? Are you still a saint?

Why is being connected to a local church not optional for the Christian?

Paul uses military language throughout Philippians. What sort of application should this have for us?

Philippians talks a lot about joy. Compare the joy Paul talks about to common references to joy in our culture. Where do people look to find joy? How is this different from Paul's view of joy?

Why do you need gospel partnerships?

Does Philippians 1:6 encourage you? If yes, how so?

Paul prays for the Philippians' love to grow. How do people define "love"? How does the book of Philippians describe real love?

Paul moves from expressing his love for people to praying for them. Are you expressing your love for others by praying for them? **Pray for some people now.**

Have you ever prayed for discernment? **Pray for discernment for both yourself and for your church.**

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 1:12-18



Head



Heart



Hands

What factors may cause people to lose their joy in ministry?

What might we learn from this passage about how to deal with critics?

Does Philippians 1:12 encourage you? How so?

Why should Philippians 1:12 give us added incentive to speak the gospel to someone? In what ways can you “put the gospel first” in your relationships?

Why do you think the sins of envy and jealousy are so prevalent among church leaders?

What’s most important to Paul: motive or message? Why?

How could Paul “rejoice” and tell others to “rejoice” even though he was in prison? How should his example impact us today?

Do you love Christ’s glory more than your own?

Pray for God to help you treasure Christ more than the approval and applause of others.

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 1:19-26



Head



Heart



Hands

How do others fill in the blank: “Living is _____”? What are you living for? Why does this matter for you today?

In verse 18 Paul says that he “will” rejoice in the future. How does this challenge you?

How does the story of Job relate to Paul’s situation in prison? What encouragement can we take from both of their stories?

Paul had an unstoppable mentality. Can we share in this perspective? If so, how would this outlook affect our daily lives?

How could Paul view death as “far better”? Do you view death this way? Explain.

What does this passage teach us about the importance of intercessory prayer?

Do you allow your trials to cause you to pout or to pray? ***What trials can you take before God in prayer now?***

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 1:27-30



Head



Heart



Hands

Agree/disagree: American Christians have lost sight of the mission.

How do we know where to draw lines of division over doctrine? Which truths are essential?

Where is the balance between focusing on our mission versus dealing with personal emotional problems?

How does this passage encourage churches to be “teammates”?

Should we cooperate with religious groups (Mormons, Catholics, etc.) on common causes such as pro-life?

Honestly, what needs to change in order for you to "conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel?"

Take time right now to pray for our country, our leaders, our local churches, and the global church.

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-18



Head



Heart



Hands

What kind of motivations does Paul give for the church to serve one another with compassion in 2:1-4?

How does the command for unity in 2:2 strike you?

Do you find it challenging to avoid rivalry and to put the needs of others ahead of your own? How would our church be different if everyone faithfully lived out Philipians 2:3-4?

How does Jesus show us the Philipians 2:3-4 kind of life?

How does this passage show us our need for a Savior?

What would happen in our relationships if we lived out Philipians 2:5-11? How can you go from being a "grasper" to a "giver"?

There is a significant difference between "working for your salvation" and "working out your salvation." Why is this an important distinction to make?

How does living with an awareness of the holy presence of God compel you to live a life of holiness? How does grumbling and complaining relate to this?

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 2:19-30



Head



Heart



Hands

In what ways does phony religiosity (those who claim the name “Christian” but seem no different from anyone else) hurt the credibility of Christ and the church?

What are some reasons we have a travel itinerary in Philippians?

Who are the people in your life who model Jesus? In what ways do they model Christlikeness?

Who are the people in your life to whom you model Jesus? In what ways would they say you model Christlikeness?

Does faithful Christian living always look extraordinary? Why or why not?

What made Timothy a great friend to Paul? Do you have friends like that? Are you a friend like that?

Why does Paul call Epaphroditus his “brother,” “fellow worker,” “fellow soldier,” and “messenger and minister”?

What are some practical ways you can “honor” servants of the gospel like Timothy and Epaphroditus in our church community?

Consider the ways God has had mercy on you today. ***Pause and thank God for the evidences of His grace.***

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 3:1-14



Head



Heart



Hands

Consider the things that people treasure. Why do they treasure these things?

Why is it important to resist legalism and false gospels? How can your church be protected from these things?

According to Philippians 3:3, what are the three distinguishing marks of a genuine Christian?

Consider the seven sources of false confidence (ritual, ethnicity, rank, tradition, rule keeping, zeal, and obedience to the law). Which source is most enticing for you? Why?

How does suffering for Jesus enable us to know Him more?

What is the prize that Paul pursues in verse 14?

Paul was a “one-thing” guy (v. 13). What would people who know you well say is your “one thing”? What one change could you make in order to pursue the one thing that matters the most?

Do you use past victories and successes as an excuse not to make every effort in the present?

Pause and ask the Lord for freedom from this sin.

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 3:15-21



Head



Heart



Hands

How can you “join in imitating” Christian examples without expecting them to be perfect?

Is there a danger in having a pastor you’ve never met as an example? Why or why not?

What are some characteristics of the “enemies of the cross” in verse 18?

How should the promise of Jesus’ return affect how you live your life?

In what ways is our church a little colony of the kingdom of heaven?

ADULT

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-23



Head



Heart



Hands

What was Paul's solution to the dispute between Euodia and Syntyche?

Why is division in the body of Christ so dangerous? How might you encourage unity rather than division?

Why are "awkward conversations" sometimes necessary to have with others?

What are the three things Paul tells us in Philippians 4:6-7 about dealing with anxiety? What does anxiety do to you? How does it affect others around you?

What does Paul mean when he says to think about admirable things? How do you do this?

Why are pastors sometimes hesitant to talk about money in the local church?

What is the relationship between being a partner and giving financially?

Explain how Philippians 4:19-20 applies to the matter of personal needs.

What are the three truths about Christian contentment according to Philippians 4:11-13?

How are you doing in the discipline of spending unhurried, unhindered time with God?

Do you know the peace that comes from being in God's presence? **Take time to pray now!**