

# PHILIPPIANS

Provided by Grace Assembly School of the Bible

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# Introduction

## **1. Where was Philippi located?**

Philippi was a chief city of Macedonia which had become both a colony and a province of the Roman Empire. It was located ten miles inland from the seaport of Neapolis.

## **2. What is the meaning of the name Philippi?**

The word Philippi means “lover of the horse.” It speaks of the Christian race and racecourse.

## **3. Who founded the work in Philippi?**

The Apostle Paul founded the Church in Philippi. He experienced his first imprisonment there, where God also wrought a great miracle to deliver him and Silas.

## **4. Who authored the Epistle to the Philippians and when?**

When Rome imprisoned Paul in AD 62 /63, he wrote to the Church in Philippi to exhort them in their faith, as well as to thank them for their benevolence during his captivity.

## **5. Name the three original converts and their diverse backgrounds.**

The Church in Philippi was most likely established based on the conversion of only three believers with diverse backgrounds – yet they were one in Christ.

- **The First Convert** was a woman named Lydia, a seller of purple. She was a native of the city of Thyatira which worshipped God.
- **The Second Convert** was a damsel possessed of a spirit of divination.
- **The Third Convert** was the Philippian jailer who guarded Paul and Silas after their imprisonment.

## **6. Summarize the purpose of the Epistle to the Philippians.**

Paul wanted to comfort and assure the believers to continue to grow in grace and not be shaken by his sufferings and imprisonments. This epistle addresses the racecourse set before each believer to win Christ as their Bridegroom and the “prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

## **7. What are the titles given to the four chapters in Philippians?**

**Chapter one-** Christ, the Life of the Racers

**Chapter two-** Christ, the Pattern for the Racers

**Chapter three-** Christ, the Prize for the Racers

**Chapter four-** Christ, the Ample Strength for the Racers

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# Chapter One

## **1. Why does the Apostle Paul open his salutation to the Philippians with “a servant of Jesus Christ?” (1:1)**

He who announced himself "an Apostle," with emphatic boldness in his last letters, stands before us here as a "servant of Christ." His spirit and manner encourage us to press on. As the Apostle, he writes, as a servant, he runs.

## **2. Why does Paul salute believers with grace and peace? (Further Insight 1:2)**

The salutation of “**Grace and peace, from God our father, and the Lord Jesus Christ**” was sent to every true believer at Philippi based on their perfect standing in Christ before God as “holy and without blame” – a description based in the perfect finished work of redemption on their behalf.

## **3. Why was Paul able to pray for the Philippian believers with joy? (Further Insight 1:4)**

These believers not only had a perfect standing in Christ before God, but they were likewise yielding to God’s workmanship in their lives. Therefore, the Apostle could make requests for them before God with joy.

## **4. What is the meaning of “a good work in us?” (1:6)**

Only those who now possess "eternal life" can enter the race. We are now running for the Prize. God, who put us on the racetrack, will enable us to "so run that we may obtain" the Prize.

## **5. Explain the fivefold bond Paul had with the Philippian Saints. (Further Insight 1:7)**

- They were in his heart. (Paul loved them with “agape” love in Christ.)
- They were in his bonds. (They were counted as being imprisoned with him, as they did not forsake him.)
- They were set for the defense of the gospel. (They continued to defend His gospel knowing that Paul was imprisoned for the truth.)
- They were in confirmation of the gospel. (The “good work” in them confirmed His gospel.)
- They were also partakers of his grace. (God’s “prison grace” was imparted to them as they suffered with Paul.)

## **6. Give a brief description of how love abounds with increased spiritual knowledge. (1:9 and Further Insights 1:9)**

The Philippian believers’ faith and love and hope are highly commended. Yet Paul prayed that their love might abound. That word, “abound,” literally means to outnumber, be over and above, pass all around and go beyond all others. This kind of

love can only abound through a knowledge of the Word of God, as revealed by the Holy Ghost in turn produces judgement, or spiritual discernment.

### **7. What does “sincere” and “without offense” mean in 1:10?**

The word "**sincere**" is made up of two Greek words, "eile" (the sun's heat) and "krino" (to examine or test). Therefore, sincere ones are those who have been tested under the hot rays of the "Sun of righteousness," who is walking with scrutinizing eyes amidst the churches -- Rev 1:14 and 2:1. He observes whether we search, believe, and enjoy the Word with a heart of love for Himself. Such saints are "**without offense.**" They walk in the light, in the plain path of faith, and obedience; hence, they do not kick the toe and stumble, which offense means. Nothing hinders them; nothing daunts them; nothing retards their running; nothing turns them aside from the racetrack.

### **8. Describe the two diverse motives for preaching the gospel that was set forth by Paul. (Further Insight 1:15-17)**

#### **The Old Nature manifested in ministry as:**

Envy, Strife, Contention, Insincerity and Pretense only added to Apostle Paul's bonds and to others standing for the Pauline truths.

**The New Nature manifested in ministry:** Goodwill, Sincerity, Love, Truth, and Knowing that Paul was set for the defense of the gospel, i.e., was defending the truth.

### **9. What is key to understanding the racecourse of the believer? (Further Insight 1:21)**

The life of Christ, or the new creation in the believer, is a racing life, i.e., racing stock. Racehorses are bred and trained to race. A trainer would not think of putting “non-racing” stock on the racecourse. Therefore, only the New Creation life in the believer has the nature and faith of Christ, which in turn quickens five spiritual senses of the inward man. These five senses are seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting, in the spiritual realm make the believer alive unto God and eternal things. Contrast the Old Creation life is not a racing life, i.e., racing stock. Since the fall in the garden, the Old Creation life is dead to God and eternal things, having only five natural senses that make him alive to this natural, temporal fallen realm.

### **10. Identify the three distinct adversaries who work against the believer and how our adversaries are defeated. (Further Insight 1:28)**

- **The world was crucified:** (Gal 6:14 KJV) “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”
- **The flesh was crucified:** (Rom 6:6 KJV) “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”
- **The Devil was destroyed through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ:** (Heb 2:14 KJV) “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

# Chapter Two

## 1. List, with a brief description, the believer's fourfold blessing exhorted by Paul. (Further Insights 2:1)

- **Consolation in Christ**, or the fact that believers were fully accepted by Him.
- **Comfort of love**, or that believers were loved even as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it.
- **Fellowship of the Spirit**, or that believers in Christ were in fellowship with God through the Holy Spirit.
- **Bowels of mercies** speak of the yearning of the Lord over every believer even as Joseph moved in his bowels towards his brethren (Gen 45:1 and 2).

## 2. List the seven surpassing, downward steps of our Lord Jesus Christ. Include a brief description of each step. (2:6-8)

- **Step Downward One – “Made Himself of no reputation”** This is the first solemn step downward. That is, He "emptied Himself." All things were created by Him and for Him.
- **Step Downward Two – “Took upon Him the form of a servant”** The Sovereign of the universe stepped from the loftiest place of absolute authority and power down to the low, menial place of a slave.
- **Step Downward Three – “And was made in the likeness of men”** He took upon Him human flesh. He who fills immensity assumed the limitations of a human body.
- **Step Downward Four – “And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself”** The Son of God did not only become a man, but He took a lowly place as a man.
- **Step Downward Five – “Became obedient”** He refused to assert His rightful authority and be obedient eternally to His Father.
- **Step Downward Six – “Unto death”** He voluntarily laid down that record-breaking life at His Father's request.
- **Step Downward Seven – “Even the death of the cross”** He died as a criminal. “He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many.”

## 3. List the seven surpassing, upward (exaltation) steps of our Lord Jesus Christ. Include a brief description of each step. (2:9-11)

- **Step Upward One – “God raised Him up”** on the third day of His interment, He came forth from the grave.
- **Step Upward Two – “God set Him at His own right hand”** – His ascension was the unequivocal proof to the whole universe that He had fully and satisfactorily performed the heroic task which His Father sent Him to do.
- **Step Upward Three – “And given Him a name”** – The word "Jesus" means “Savior,” and given to us by God his father.
- **Step Upward Four – “Above every name”** – This name given to the Son of God is not above any name or title of Deity.

- **Step Upward Five** – “Every knee shall bow” – How much better to humble oneself by choice now and walk in God's will, fall in love with Jesus, and escape the awful fiery judgments that are coming upon the earth.
- **Step Upward Six** – “Every tongue should confess” – And every tongue in heaven, on the earth, and beneath -- all tongues shall confess.
- **Step Upward Seven** – “Jesus Christ as Lord” – Even the devil will have to bow before the mighty Conqueror, Jesus.

**4. What does Paul want us to learn from the statement “that I may not run in vain?” (2:16)**

The Apostle Paul was running for the Prize, and he longed for others to follow his fervent example. He was not satisfied that he alone should win. He was not selfish in his pursuit. He wanted other saints also to share the high honor and glory of the Bridehood.

**5. What is the joy Paul experiences through a “poured out life?” (Further Insight 2:17)**

The Apostle is speaking of himself as being poured out as the Old Testament “Drink Offering” that accompanied the blood sacrifices or Christ offering Himself (Lev. 23:3 and Num. 15:5). This was a type of the Holy Spirit poured out on Christ’s work on the cross and making it real and known to those who will accept this wonderful gift. The greater “Drink Offering” was the Holy Spirit who was sacrificially poured out on the believers on the Day of Pentecost. Thereafter, the “Drink Offering” speaks of a “poured out life” of sacrifice and service for others through Christ in the believer. Also, the Holy Spirit is enabled within us to help us make the Person and Work of Christ known to others. A “Drink Offering” was simply poured out disappearing into the ground. Only eternity will reveal those who gave their time and life to further the gospel without earthly recognition.

**6. Explain Paul’s meaning when he emphasis his care for the Philippians’ “state.” (2:19)** Paul cared that his followers should walk as a new creation, as united to the Last Adam, Christ. They were instructed to "walk in the Spirit" and live like God lives – not that they might be saved, but that being saved they might receive a reward.

**7. What was the deeper purpose Paul wanted the Philippian Church to see Epaphroditus who was “sick nigh unto death?” (2:27)**

Epaphroditus was exceedingly unselfish and self-sacrificing. Thus, he was set forth as an example with Paul and Timothy to Christian racers for this whole church period. The faith of the Philippian believers would increase to see the divine healing and desire and love to serve others.

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# Chapter Three

## 1. Name and describe the three religious opponents identified in 3:2.

- **Beware of the dogs**- those against Christ saying they are religious fellows, but not born again.
- **Beware of the evil workers** - There are two classes. First, every unconverted preacher is an evil worker. Second, every converted preacher who does not judge the old man in himself becomes an evil worker, because he will not teach the whole truth, whether for fear of place, or pride of race, or lack of grace.
- **Beware of the concision**- "The concision" refers to those who attempt to cut off the self-life by their own efforts; hence, refuse the truth of our death with Christ. The so-called law-keepers are the "concision" to which Paul refers.

## 2. Explain the difference between concision and circumcision. (Further Insights 3:2&3)

The "**concision**" refers to those who practice cutting off "bad flesh" while sparing "good flesh" producing a self-righteousness by works. This is very deceiving as it is a counterfeit of the true righteous by grace through faith which in short is "Christ in us." "**Circumcision**" refers to the cutting off the old creation through Christ's death on the cross.

## 3. List and briefly describe the seven boasts of the flesh Paul named in 3:5 and 6. (Further Insight 3:5&6)

- Circumcised the eighth day – A religious rite initiated by Abraham that separated the nation of Israel from all other nations.
- Of the stock of Israel – Israel was the chosen earthly seed of Abraham through whom the promised Messiah would come.
- The tribe of Benjamin – Benjamin and Judah were the two faithful tribes that remained in the land after the ten tribes went into captivity. Benjamin was a warring tribe.
- A Hebrew of Hebrews – Abraham was the first Hebrew which means he was a pilgrim and stranger looking for the promised land.
- The law – a Pharisee – The Pharisees were considered the orthodox religion of the day and subscribed to the letter of the law.
- Zeal - persecuting the Church – The Apostle hailed the early Christians into prison assenting to many of their deaths because he believed they blasphemed God.
- Righteousness of the law – blameless – The Apostle not only a hearer but a faithful doer of the law in which he was outwardly blameless.

## 4. List and briefly describe Paul's seven "standing," or "states," in the new creation. (Further Insight 3:7)

- He was now circumcised or entirely cut off from the flesh through the death of Christ.
- He now truly belonged to the stock of Israel in Christ the chosen seed.

- He became a Benjamite as part of the faithful remnant believing the good report of the gospel. He went on to become a faithful warrior of the faith as he suffered as a martyr.
- He became a true Hebrew, as one passing through this world as a pilgrim and stranger.
- He became a spiritual Pharisee as the laws of God were now written in the tables of his heart as a new creation.
- His zeal for the gospel excelled any of his contemporaries.

**5. List the seven mileposts recommended by Paul to reach the goal. (3:8-10)**

- "That I may gain Christ"
- "And be found in Him."
- "Not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God by faith."
- "That I may know him"
- "That I may know the power of His resurrection."
- "And the fellowship of His sufferings."
- "Made conformable to His death."

**6. What was Paul emphasizing in his statement “if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead?” (Further Insight 3:11)**

The Apostle desired to attain unto the “out” resurrection from among the sleeping ones. In other words, he desired to be raised in the first rank of resurrection ahead of the general Church.

**7. Name and briefly describe the three expressed attitudes of a perfect heart, racing for the Prize of Jesus Christ. (3:13)**

- "Forgetting the things which are behind"- (Forgetting) Paul counted all his natural gains loss for Christ.
- "And stretching forward"- (Stretching) Paul was stretching out and up to the uttermost by his God-given enabling to the things before him.
- “To the things which are before”- (Chasing) The things before leaving the things behind.

**8. What can we gain in the comfort “knowing God shall reveal this even unto you?” (Further Insight 3:15)**

A believer is counted as overcoming from the moment they have a “perfect heart” even though their walk may be imperfect. They are not responsible until God reveals their shortcomings but thereafter must walk in the new revealed light.

**9. What do the words “Let us”, “attained”, and “walk” mean in 3:16?**

"Let us" Paul entreats us, reminding us continually that he is in the race with us. The word "attained" means "to come in first, to outstrip. The word "walk" means "to stand in line, or rank, to walk straight."



**10. Why does Paul weep for the enemies of the cross of Christ? (3:18)**

The Apostle is speaking of gospel ministers and believers of his day who were walking (literally strolling or wandering in the wilderness) in their flesh, or old creation, and taking their inheritance in this world. In doing so, they were denying the cross which had crucified the flesh and the world unto them, and, in this measure, they had become enemies of the Cross through their walk.

**11. What are two ways a believer's body must be changed to receive a body of glory? (Further Insight 3:21)**

The believer's body must be changed, either by death and resurrection or translation, because it is a body of humiliation having housed the sinful old creation. We will receive a body of glory like unto our Lord.

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# Chapter Four

## **1. What prompted the deep tenderness of Paul for the believers at Philippi? (4:1)**

Twice in this chapter, he calls them "brethren." Twice in the first verse, Paul refers to them as "dearly beloved." They had proved such a steadfast comfort and inspiration to him, that he held fast to his faith for them. The saints at Philippi were so deeply rooted and highly built up in Christ, that Paul entertained no fears of their end.

## **2. Describe the meanings of Euodias' and Syntyche's names and how those meanings represent a balanced spiritual life for a believer. (4:2)**

The meanings of their names indicate different gifts and activities. However, the gifts and activities also warranted mutual criticism. Euodias means a good journey, a sweet scent. She represents the prayer life of a Christian, which emits a perfume pleasing to the God of grace. Syntyche means to meet and speak with and represents an active life of ministering to others. These two qualities combined make a well-balanced Christian.

**3. Who is the "True yokefellow" addressed in 4:3? "True yokefellow"** was the pastor of that flock in Philippi. Paul turns abruptly and speaks to his "true yokefellow" like John addressed the angels of the seven churches in Revelation. A "true yokefellow" takes upon his neck the other end of the same yoke and bears the full Gospel of matchless grace to a needy world. It is anyone who stands shoulder to shoulder with the Apostle Paul in his arduous, self-sacrificing ministry of prayer and service.

## **4. Give a brief description of how we are to take requests to the Lord. Include the meanings of the following words: "prayer," "supplication," and "thanksgiving." (4:6)**

Prayer in this verse means to worship, while supplication means a cry, or entreaty because of need. To call upon the Lord "with thanksgiving" shows that we really expect an answer.

## **5. Describe the "Peace of God." (Further Insight 4:7)**

Every believer has peace with God based on being justified by faith, but in this verse, is a promise of the "peace of God." God is never disturbed or anxious as He is in absolute control of all things. We may or may not see our requests answered immediately but we will receive "a peace that passeth all understanding." This means the Lord has heard our petitions and will move on our behalf, in His will, His Time and His way.

## **6. Describe the "God of Peace." (Further Insight 4:9)**

The Apostle had taught these saints the truth of God's eternal victory through redemption and that the adversary was defeated and thus the "all things" that come our way are to be received from the hand of the Lord and work for our good. They witnessed this attitude in the midst of great adversity. In this verse, we are introduced

to the “the God of peace” which is a graduation from the “peace of God.” Here it is God already reigning though it be by faith.

**7. What is the mystery of the instruction of being full and hungry along with abound and suffer? (4:12)**

It is profoundly mysterious how one can have nothing, and yet, rejoice like a millionaire. It is also, a greater mystery how one can have abundance and not waste it on the flesh but lavish it on the salvation of others. In this abundance, one does not grow careless, independent, big, or boastful, but holds it all humbly and gratefully at God's disposal. The same Lord that orders prosperity sometimes orders adversity. Spiritual maturity receives both from his hand.

**8. What is the meaning of the words “all things,” “through Christ,” and “strengthen”? (Further Insight 4:13)**

The “all things” includes the things that come to our lives by divine permission as we journey through this world. “Through Christ” as the twofold meaning of “in Christ” and “Christ in us.” Please note that “strengtheneth” means an ongoing strength, as it is needed. Within this verse, we learn that our Lord has gone the way before us and has drawn the strength needed for all the redeemed for all time, which he later called “my strength.”

**9. Why did the giving of the Philippi believers produce a sweet smell to God? (4:18)**

Those saints gave out of their penury, and they were willing beyond their ability. It was a financial loss to them to give. That is why it smelled sweet to Jehovah.

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