

The Book of Philippians

Lesson 1

Study Notes

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Text: Philippians 1:1-6.

Introduction: In 356 B.C. King Philip of Macedonia (the father of Alexander the Great) took this town and expanded it, renaming it Philippi. The Romans captured it in 168 B.C. ; and in 42 B.C. , the defeat of the forces of Brutus and Cassius by those of Anthony and Octavian (later Augustus) took place outside the city. Octavian turned Philippi into a _____ colony and a military outpost. The citizens of this colony were regarded as citizens of Rome and given a number of special privileges. This was Paul's _____ European Church. Founded about A.D. 51, in the early part of Paul's _____ Missionary Journey as seen in Acts __. Lydia, the seller of purple, was his first convert and also a damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, and the Philippian jailor. Act 16:12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the _____ city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

Act 16:13-15 *Luke, the beloved physician, was the church's pastor for the first ____ years. It may have been Luke's home, where he practiced medicine. Luke must have had a hand in the development of the _____ character of the Church. As far as we know, the Philippian Church was one of the _____ on the New Testament Churches. Most of the members were _____ and _____ Gentiles. There were comparatively few Jews being in the place, as proved by the absence of a synagogue and any Hebrew names in the list of converts.*

The whole atmosphere of this epistle is that of _____. When Paul penned this letter, he was in a Roman prison. The other prison epistles are: Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. The words "____" and "____" are not found in this epistle. The words "joy" and "rejoicing" are use _____ times. We find no murmuring and complaining. Paul counts "it all joy" and is glorying "in tribulation".

Philippians shows us what true Christian experience is, the outward expression of the Christ-life within the believer in the power of the Holy Spirit, apprehending our position in Christ and manifesting Christ in our daily walk. Paul's first visit to Philippi, he and his co-worker were arrested, beaten, and thrown into prison. But in spite of the fact, they were in jail, they sang praises to God, they prayed, and God answered their prayer. The very prison that held them became a place of _____, where God's saving grace and mighty power were evidenced in a very unusual way.

Epaphroditus had brought to the apostle a _____ from his beloved Philippians, and on his return the apostle availed himself of the opportunity to forward then this epistle, and thus to pour out to them the fullness of his heart in thanksgiving and prayers and exhortations for their spiritual welfare, and to encourage them to rejoice always in every _____. He excites them to love, to unity, and to peace among themselves. He cautioned them against _____, and Judaizing Christians that were for joining Moses and Christ, law and the Gospel, and works and grace, together.

Philippians 1:1

A. The servants of Jesus Christ.

Paul does not mention his _____ in this epistle. In the church at Philippi there seem to be very little out of order. There was no doctrinal error to correct as in _____, and no gross carnality to rebuke as in _____. He was not breaking no new theological ground. Paul was writing to supportive friends in this epistle. Paul calls himself a servant and names Timothy as a fellow-servant, the word which he uses retaining, to some degree, the meaning of bond-servant or slave. The term "servant" thus expresses Paul's intense fervor and _____ in his calling. In writing to the Philippians Paul associates himself with Timothy, his son in the ministry, who had been with him at Philippi when he first preached the Gospel in that city.

Act 16:1-3.

B. To all the saints.

The word translated "saints" literally means "_____." It is one of those universal descriptive titles common in the New Testament for all those who belong to the family of God. God divides the whole human race into two classes: _____ and _____. Saints are simply saved sinners.

The harmony of the Philippian assembly was reflected in this letter by Paul's reference to the members of the congregation as "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi." Whenever the word saint appears in the Bible, it is almost always in the _____ form. This is a gentle reminder to us that saints are not meant for isolation, but for _____.

C. To the bishops and deacons.

The word "bishops" is translated as "_____" also has reference to "shepherding." Thus, the bishops were the overseers, guardians, those who had the care for them. The word is synonymous with presbyter and elder; they were the _____ leaders. They were not dictators, but godly examples and undershepherds.

The word "deacons" means _____, those who run errands and wait on tables and other menial tasks. Both the bishop and deacon were recognized as officers of the church at this time.

C. Grace and peace.

Grace and peace, always in that order. Grace is the _____ and _____ is the result. Where there is no grace there can be no peace. No one illustrates the concept of 'peace through grace' better than John Newton. Although he started out life in a Christian home, he was orphaned at the age of six and ended up living with an agnostic relative. Newton was so abused in this home that he finally ran away and joined the British Navy. After serving in the navy for some time, he deserted and ran away to Africa. He openly admitted that he went there for just one purpose: 'to sin his fill.' In Africa, he joined forces with a Portuguese slave trader, and once again began to experience cruelty. The young Newton ran away to the coast where he was picked up by a slave ship on its way to England. A few days later, John Newton broke into the ship's supply of rum and distributed it to the crew so that they all got drunk. In a stupor, Newton himself fell into the sea and was narrowly saved from drowning by an officer who speared him with a harpoon, leaving a fist-sized scar in his thigh. Toward the end of the voyage, the ship on which Newton was sailing encountered heavy winds, was blown off course, and began to sink. Newton was sent down into the hold with the slaves and told to man the pumps. He was sure that the ship would sink and that he would drown. As he worked, he began to cry out to God. He remembered

verses he had been taught as a child, and as he remembered them, he was miraculously born again. He went on to become one of England's great teachers of the Word of God. Now we can understand the depth of meaning in the words to John Newton's famous hymn, Amazing Grace How Sweet the Sound.

Philippians 1:3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

D. Prayer of Thanksgiving.

Paul here expresses his personal relationship to God. The word "thank" here is used in the New Testament in connection with the _____ of the four thousand.

Matthew 15:36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

The word is used the same way in the story of Paul on board the storm-tossed ship.

Acts 27:35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

Paul was as thankful for the Philippians as he was for his _____. Whenever he thought of them his heart rose to God in gratitude.

We here receive an insight into Paul's _____, into his relation to every congregation and every single Christian. Whenever he thinks of the congregation at Philippi, he finds cause for grateful prayer to God.

Philippians 1:4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

The term "always" meant that Paul prayed for them with _____. It was Paul's practice to pray for the saints. Scripture tells us he prayed for the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, the Thessalonians, and he told Timothy that he prayed for him night and day, and prays for Philemon.

2Timothy 1:2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

Philippians is referred to as the epistle of "_____." It gave Paul joy to pray for his friends while in prison. He may not have had the opportunity to preach and travel as a missionary in prison but Satan could not take away from him the joy of prayer.

Philippians 1:5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

The Philippians had stood by Paul, supported him, and followed him with their prayers. They had proved their friendship and fellowship in a practical way with their financial support to which he was so thankful for. It brought comfort to his heart as he remembered the warm reception of Lydia and the Philippian jailor whom took him home that night and cared for his wounds. Past blessings often carry us on when times of difficulty come in the present hour.