

PHILIPPIANS

STUDY GUIDE

AUTHOR & DATE

Though Timothy is named along with Paul in the first verse, **Paul** is the one who authored the letter. In fact, some scholars consider Philippians to be the standard of Pauline thought.

Philippians was written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, likely toward the middle timeframe of that incarceration. Paul speaks of the impact of his imprisonment (1:12-13), yet also speaks of hoping to visit Philippi soon (2:4). Therefore, the book was probably written **between AD 61-62**.

THE CITY OF PHILIPPI & THE CHURCH

The city of Philippi was an important northeastern city in Greece for the advancement of the gospel to a wider audience and as a gateway between Asian Minor and the continent of Europe.



Paul established the church on his 2nd missionary journey. **Read Acts 16:9-40 as a refresher** of how that all occurred and the key beginnings of the church there. Though Paul had to leave Philippi, Luke remained for a time. There is an obvious loyalty of the church toward Paul and a heartfelt love from Paul for the Philippians.

LITERARY STRUCTURE

Introduction (1:1-11)
Paul's Imprisonment (1:12-26)
The Need for Humility (1:27-2:30)
The Need for Knowing Christ (3:1-21)
Final Encouragement & Thanks (4:1-23)

OBSERVATION WORDS

Take note of what you learn about each of these. For God, Jesus, & the Holy Spirit, note what you learn & also specific references to how Jesus & the Spirit are represented.

- **God, Jesus, Holy Spirit**
- **Imprisonment, Suffering, etc.**
- **Unity, One mind, etc.**
- **Gospel/Good News, etc.**
- **Humility** (all descriptions, synonyms)
- **Rejoice, Joy**

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

- What did the Lord teach YOU through this book?

- What did you learn about God the Father?

- What were some ways Jesus & the Holy Spirit were represented? What are some things you learned about each of them?

- Paul speaks of the “fruit of your salvation” (NLT) or “fruit of righteousness” in Phil. 1:11. Based on your reading of all of Philippians, what does that fruit include? How would you describe the “fruit” of salvation or righteousness?

- Describe the differences between selfishness and humility. Is it possible to be selfish while displaying humility?

- What is Paul's joy and rejoicing based upon? How might your life reflect greater joy and rejoicing? What needs to shift in your understanding of Christ and His Spirit so you are a rejoicer?

- In Phil. 3:8, Paul speaks of the value of "knowing Christ." Describe what it is to "know Christ" and why it is so valuable. What, or how, do you need to "know" Him better?

- Paul instructs what we are to think about as believers (Phil. 4:8). What are those things and how do you accomplish this in a world which loves sensationalism, gossip, & negativity?

- How do you foster contentment (Phil. 4:11)? What causes someone to experience being content? Where are you on the "contentment scale?"

- What was the nature of the Philippians' giving? Why did they give and for what purposes? How did the Lord view their giving, and what is the promised result? How does this all affect your thoughts about giving?

Key Word – How do you summarize the whole book in one word or short phrase?

Key Verse – What verse stands out to you as the summary of the whole book, or a verse that the Lord used to teach you something important. Why did you choose the verse you did?

Key Chapter – What chapter summarizes the book, is a turning point, or just stands out to you? Why did you choose this chapter?

ASSIGNMENT: Actively practice Phil. 4:8-11 and write about your experience. What was easy? What was difficult? What changes did you notice in your thoughts & behaviors as a result?