

Philippians

Lesson 2

Chapter 1:1-11

Participant Guide

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David R. Steele

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Lesson 2

Philippians 1:1-11

Praying with Joy

I thank my God every time I remember you. *Philippians 1:3*

Prayers

Introduction

How do you bless someone you love? Paul begins by *telling* the Philippians his joy and affection for them and gives thanks for the support he received from them throughout his ministry, even now that he is in prison. Lavish love, thanks, and praise pour out of every page of Paul's letter. Paul took an *active role* in nurturing their faith. Even though long absences punctuated their fellowship, Paul visited them to *enjoy their presence* whenever possible on his journeys. Paul also *cast a vision of a special future* for them. He was confident God would complete his work in them, bringing them to full maturity in love, knowledge, insight, and righteousness. He compared them to bright shining stars, holding out the word of life to a world lost in darkness.

Read Philippians 1:1-11 Thanksgiving and Prayer

Phil 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

Phil 1:2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Phil 1:3 I thank my God every time I remember you.

Phil 1:4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy

Phil 1:5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now,

Phil 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Phil 1:7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me.

Phil 1:8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Phil 1:9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight,

Phil 1:10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,

Phil 1:11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

1. What words set the tone of Paul's letter to the Philippians?

Phil 4:10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

Phil 4:11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

Phil 4:12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

Phil 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Phil 4:14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.

Phil 4:15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only;^e

Phil 4:16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need.

Phil 4:17 Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.^h

Phil 4:18 I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

Phil 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Phil 4:20 To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen

7. It is surprising to read about Paul talking about joy while in prison. What does his joy teach you about spiritual joy?

8. The word translated partnership in Philippians 1:5 is "koinonia" and implies an ideal of intimate communion. Our word communion is related to koinonia. Paul and the Philippians shared life experiences and developed strong bonds of affection. Their close relationship is shown in their concern for Paul, sharing in his troubles, and providing financial support. Paul responded with great affection to their concern, shown in verses 1:7-8, "since I have you in my heart" and "how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus." How can you help build greater intimacy with your church relationships?

9. Philippians 1:6 is a favorite verse in the Bible, "being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Looking back on how God began his good work in you brings assurance of how God will carry it on to completion. Discuss either - how God began his work in you, or He has brought you to this moment and is He still carrying you to completion?

10. Paul provides an excellent example of a prayer for the spiritual growth of others. I've always thought Paul's prayer in verses 9-11 modeled a father's love for his children. What are some of the things Paul prays for the Philippians?

^{Phil 1:9} And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ^{Phil 1:10} so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, ^{Phil 1:11} filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

- a. Verse 9
 - b. Verse 10
 - c. Verse 11
11. Why are love, insight, and discernment so important in the Christian walk?
12. The fruit of righteousness is the same as the fruit of the Holy Spirit. What are the fruits of righteousness Paul prayed for in verse 11? "Bearing fruit" is a common theme in Paul's letters (Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 5:9, Colossians 1:10, and James 3:17-18).
13. Describe any ministry partnerships you have with the group and how it has been a blessing in your life.

Closing Prayer