

LIVE YOUR FAITH THE RIGHT WAY: SERVE THE LORD  
 The Letter to the Philippians Believers

**You are going to read someone else's mail.** Paul wrote this letter to the church in Philippi, not to us. However, God the Holy Spirit inspired the words of Paul to be included in the Word of God so that we all could hear, learn and grow.

This study is strictly an overview of this letter. Let's skim over it and discover the main issues that Paul wanted to cover. Pay attention to the summary headings at the end of each section of the letter's text. \*

Sections in Philippian Letter	Question to help us skim the letter	*Answer for you to write in
<b>BE READY</b>		
1:1-2	Keep in touch with whom?	
1:3-5	Keep doing what?	
1:6-8	Remember what?	
1:9	Demonstrate what?	
1:10	Keep making what?	
1:11	Acknowledge what?	
1:12-18	Let hard times do what?	
1:19-26	Be willing to do what?	
1:27-30	Maintain what?	
2:1-4	Don't insist on what?	
<b>WATCH</b>		
2:5-11	Jesus Christ demonstrated what?	
2:12-16	People are looking for what?	
2:17-18	How did Paul live his life?	

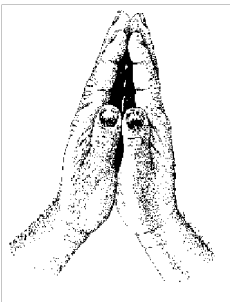
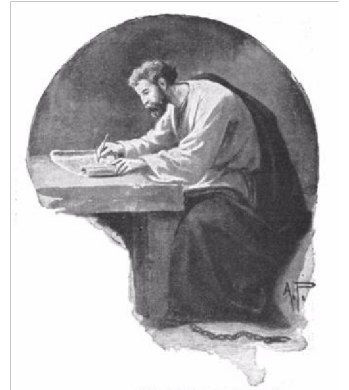
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2:19-24	How did Timothy live his life?	
2:25-30	How did Epaphroditus live?	
<b>GO</b>		
3:1-6	God's plan does not need what?	
3:7-9	To please God, we need what?	
3:10-16	Focus on what?	
3:17-21	Pursue what?	
4:1-3	Help people do what?	
4:4-9	Live a life that does what?	
4:10-13	Remember to do what?	
4:14-19	Remember to do what?	
4:20-23	Keep in touch with whom?	

## **ALWAYS BE READY TO SERVE THE LORD**

From Paul & Timothy, willing servants of Jesus Christ, to all the believers in Jesus Christ in Philippi and the church leaders. You have responded to the grace given by God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, so you now have their peace.

[Keep in touch with each other – 1:1-2]



When I pray for you, I do it joyfully, giving thanks to God for you, because of your faithful participation with me in giving out the message of Christ from the first day we met until now. [Keep praying for each other – 1:3-5]

I know for a fact that when you received salvation back then, your new life in Christ began, and that God will continue developing and maturing your life until He comes again. I so enjoy and cherish these thoughts about you because I love you so much. Be assured that you are partners with me in the confident and successful spreading of God's message of grace even though I am in prison, and you are in Philippi. God is my witness – I love you with a love that only Christ can give, and I so wish to be with you. [Keep remembering your conversion – 1:6-8]



This I wish to God for you that the love and affection you have for God and for others will surpass what is expected as demonstrated by your obedience to God's Word, and by your practical acts for others. This overflowing love must function based on an awareness of God's person, truth, and will; this love must be experienced and used each day of our lives.

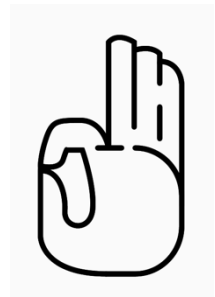
[Keep demonstrating love to others – 1:9]

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Make a deliberate choice to include in your life that which is acceptable to God, those things which differ from the world's values, and which are of more value to God and to you. Do this so that you may be tested by others and found to be morally pure and genuine – thus, not causing others to stumble and go astray; keep doing this until Jesus returns.

[Keep making the right choices – 1:10]



This is all possible because you have been clothed completely with the righteousness of Christ at your conversion which enables you to have and maintain a holy and right relationship with a holy God. Now, this life of Christ can be lived out through you to magnify God, not you. [Remember & acknowledge whose power is within you – 1:11]

I want to assure you, brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me has actually helped to spread the Gospel message; people here, including the palace guards, know that my imprisonment is because of my stand for Jesus Christ. Many believers have watched my circumstances and have gained confidence from the Lord to boldly speak the Word without fear. I know there are some who preach Christ out of selfish ambition with insincerity, trying to cause division and hurt me.

Others preach out of love for God and for the hearers, knowing that I have been appointed by God to proclaim the Gospel. Here's my bottom line: as long as Christ is preached, I do not care about the person's personal motivation. I will rejoice regardless.

[Let the hard times build your character – 1:12-18]



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I AM WILLING

I continue to rejoice in my personal situation because of I continue to rejoice in my personal situation because of your prayer support & the sustaining power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. My strong desire is that I not shamefully back away from opportunities to share the Gospel, but that I will maintain a boldness to allow Christ to be honored & magnified through my life, whether that be by living or dying. Christ is my reason for living; Christ will be with me in my dying; then, I will be with Him. However, if I continue living, I will get to see more people receive salvation. I don't know what I would choose; I am caught between two great things: I want to go be with Christ which is certainly better, but staying here for you is more necessary. I am confident that I will be staying to continue monitoring your spiritual progress and daily joy. Hopefully, your joy will be encouraged and increased by my coming to you sometime soon.

[Be willing to be used by God in the lives of others – 1:19-26]

Make sure your behavior brings honor to Christ, so that whether I see you again or not, I will definitely hear that you are living in sincere unity with one another, working as one body to accomplish the spread of Christ's good news, and not giving in to the ever-present persecution. Your proper Christian responses will be a sign that your oppressors will eventually be destroyed, and that you will be delivered by your God. May I remind you that as part of God's grace in your life, you have been both enabled to believe in Christ, and allowed to suffer for Christ, just as I am here. We are in this together and for the long haul.

[Maintain Godly behavior privately & publicly – 1:27-30]





Thus, we need unity. Since we are unified with Christ, that encourages us to have unity with one another; since God places His love in our hearts, that produces spiritual unity; since the Spirit indwells us, He guides us into humble and unified behavior; and since God places a tender concern for others within us, He gives us a basis for spiritual unity and humility. Since this is all true, cause me great joy, by maintaining the same attitude, agreeing to love one another no matter what, functioning as one body, and working toward one purpose. Don't let your selfish ambitions and dishonesty get in the way; rather, in true selflessness, get excited about making the other guy look good. Don't promote your own selfish interests, but help the other guy attain what he is reaching for.

[Don't fight for your own way – 2:1-4]

## **WATCH THE WAY THAT OTHERS HUMBLY SERVE THE LORD**

You need to have the same attitude Jesus had. Even though He possessed the very essence and nature of God, He did not hesitate to set aside His self-willed use of Deity and He surrendered His right to reveal His glory as God while He was a man. He allowed Himself to be made nothing while retaining His Deity and set aside all self-interests. He willingly and humbly agreed to serve mankind and to obey His Father by becoming a genuine human being without a sin nature. And while Jesus was a human being, He was humbly willing to be put to death the same way that a criminal is executed. Because Jesus was obedient and unified with the will of the Father, the Father honored Him above all mankind and revealed His power and Deity through the resurrection and the ascension. As a result, all intelligent beings, whether angels or saints in heaven, people on the earth, the devil, the demons, or the unsaved in hell, will bow in submission; and every intelligent being will confess verbally that Jesus Christ is God Almighty. This will bring glory to God the Father.

[Jesus Christ demonstrated humility– 2:5-11]



# UNITY

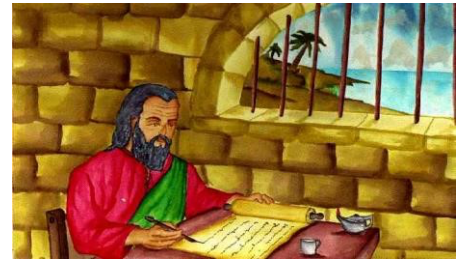
Continuing our discussion of living in unity and giving up our self-interests – remember that Jesus was in harmony with God’s will. You are dear people and you have consistently obeyed God’s Word since the time I was first with you. I am not with you now; so, more than ever, put into practice in your daily living the salvation that you already have; trust in God and not in yourselves as you do this because God will make you willing and desirous to do

His plans. He will accomplish His pleasure and purpose. When living out your faith, do everything without complaining and arguing so that you will be seen as a united people, strong in your faith and of good reputation while living in a sinful and accusing society. You must shine like stars in your community and graciously present the Word of God to others so that I can be thankful when Jesus comes that I worked among you successfully and did not waste my time.

[People are looking for your humility – 2:12-16]

Even though I am being given as a sacrifice to God through this imprisonment for the faith that you received, I am joyful about that, and I want you to be too. Let me know that you are joyful and grateful for the way God has done things.

[Paul demonstrated humility – 2:17-18]



# Timothy

Lord willing, I hope to send Timothy to you soon so that I might be encouraged by finding out how you are all doing. There is no one else who shares my burden and heart desire like he does, and he is genuinely concerned for you. Many out there in ministry seek

their own selfish interests and not the interests of Jesus. However, not Timothy. He has proven himself to be a worthy partner with me in spreading the Gospel; he serves me like a son would his father. For all these reasons, I hope to send him immediately, if my circumstances here allow it. I am trusting the Lord that I too might be

able to come to you soon. [Timothy demonstrated humility – 2:19-24]

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In the meantime, I thought it necessary to send your messenger, Epaphroditus, back to you. He is my brother, fellow-worker and has been ministering to my needs. However, he has been eager to see you again, and was very distressed that you heard of his illness. He was so sick that he was near death, but God had mercy on him and raised him back to health. God had mercy on me too by sparing me the great sorrow of almost losing a loved one. So, I have eagerly sent him back to you so that you may see him and rejoice, and so that I will not have to be so concerned about you. Receive him joyfully as someone special from the Lord, and honor and respect him and other men like him. Honor him especially because he almost died in providing services to me that you should have been doing. [Epaphroditus demonstrated humility – 2:25-30]

## **GET OUT THERE AND SERVE THE LORD**

Finally, my brothers and sisters, allow yourself to be controlled by the joy of the Lord. I don't mind Jewish leaders who are teaching that you're writing the same things over and over. It's good for you to hear it all again. Look out for those personal accomplishments and sacrifices help you gain favor with God. All of us, when we became the power of believers, had spiritual surgery performed by God instead on our hearts. We now have access to God for worship through His Spirit. Our confidence is no longer in ourselves, but in the majesty and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, even though I, Paul, certainly have the credentials to rely on my own abilities and qualifications. If any of you think you can also, be advised that I have you beat. Since I am a pure-blooded Jew, I was circumcised on the eighth day and came from the honored tribe of Benjamin. I am the Hebrew son of Hebrew parents, guaranteeing that I know the language and the customs of God's chosen people. I belonged to the strictest religious sect, that of the Pharisees; I faithfully persecuted the Christian church, and I claimed to be legalistically Godly. I had it all; what more could I ask for?

[Remember that personal abilities & heritage don't accomplish God's plan – 3:1-6]

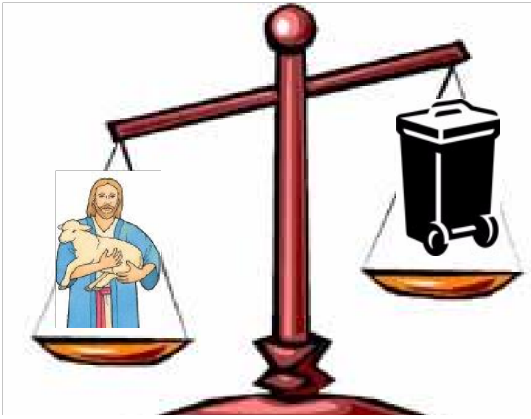


**The power of  
Christ instead!**



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I realize now that all those things that I thought made me important cannot even remotely compare to what Christ has done for me. Furthermore, my personal human efforts and achievements will never compare to the privilege of knowing Christ as my Lord and Savior. When I decided to follow Christ, I lost everything that I thought was important. What was I thinking? All that stuff was garbage. I have Christ living in my life now. The ability to please God and live a godly life is not based on my religion or on my own efforts; it is based on my personal & dependent faith in Jesus Christ.

[Remember that only Christ can enable you to accomplish anything that will please God – 3:7-9]

I want my faith in Christ to get stronger. I want to know Christ more intimately by daily experience. I have the same power in my life that raised Christ from death. I choose to allow that power to work in my life. I choose to stand up for the cause of Christ where I live and work, no matter what it may cost me. Since Christ died to deliver me from sin, I choose to live my life apart from the sinful ways of my past, and to use that resurrection power to live a new life for God. Why do I keep on going? Because I am looking forward to that time when Christ will return and call me to heaven to be with Him. Just because my future in heaven is guaranteed, that does not mean that I have attained my desired intimacy with the Lord, nor that I have reached maturity. I continue to press on toward those victories which Christ has planned for me. Brothers and sisters, there is much spiritual growth ahead for me, still. I refuse to stop growing, though. Here's what I do: I do not drag the failures of the past behind me. Rather, I purpose to move ahead to the better things the Lord has planned for me. I keep on pressing on in my daily living to please God and reject evil so that I will be rewarded by Christ in heaven one day. If you are remotely interested in spiritual maturity, you must join me in this "pressing on". If you are not interested, God will reveal your error to you. Let us all demonstrate in our behavior the qualities that Christ is building within us.



[Remember to keep focused on your own personal maturity – 3:10-16]

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Brothers and sisters, join me in pursuing a life that radiates the qualities of Jesus Christ. Follow my example and not that of the self-righteous Jewish leaders. There are many believers among you living this Christ-like life. Watch them; join them. I must remind you with deep grief in my heart that there are false teachers among you who hate the gospel of Christ and

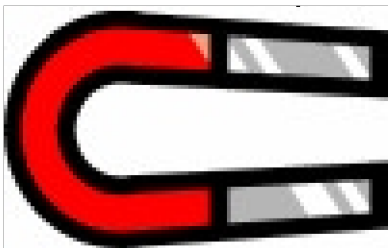
who are destined for punishment in hell. They trust in their own achievements, focus only on their physical desires, pride themselves in shameful behaviors, and depend on the values and possessions of this present world to gain religious favor with God. Be alerted! Our ultimate citizenship is not on this earth, but rather is in heaven, from which our awaited Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ will come. With His almighty power, He will change our bodies, which possess disease and limitations, into glorified bodies like that of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Remember to pursue the right reward – 3:17-21]

Since we have such a wonderful reward awaiting us in heaven, continue to be faithful and steadfast each day, my brothers and sisters. I want to see you very much. Your turning to, and obeying the Lord, is a constant joy and a present encouragement for me. I strongly urge my two sisters, Euodia and Syntyche, to live in godly harmony with each other. I also ask you, brother X, to intervene here. These two sisters have served side by side with me in the past in presenting the gospel message. They have also worked with Clement and many other Christian workers.



[Remember to help people get along in unity – 4:1-3]



Despite the difficult external circumstances around you, relax in and practice the inner joy Christ has put within you. Let me say it again: relax in and practice the inner joy Christ has put within you. Be gentle and do not retaliate against others. Use the short time we have left wisely and lovingly. Don't become overwhelmed with worry. Rather, approach God with a thankful heart and with a specific need. Present

that need to God in detail and with a desired answer. This kind of intimacy with God will bring peace and protection to our troubled emotions and thoughts even when we cannot always figure

it all out. Finally, let your mind carefully consider and focus on these excellent and proven qualities: be honest and reliable; be dignified and worthy of respect; conform to God's standards; be wholesome and separate from impurity; promote peace and not conflict; and be consistently positive and constructive. You have heard this from my teaching before, and you have seen these qualities demonstrated in my life. Live these qualities out in your lives and you will definitely enjoy the peace that only God can provide.

[Remember to live a life that attracts people together into peace & harmony – 4:4-9]

I am grateful to the Lord that you continue to express concern for my needs. Even though you were not always able to help in a tangible way, you have not forgotten me. Thanks for your current gifts. I am not mentioning this to squeeze money out of you, but rather to present the need and then let God move in your hearts. I have learned contentment and I will not allow my changing circumstances to affect the inner God-given sufficiency that I am enjoying. I have learned how to cope with either lack of money or plenty of money. I have also had the privilege of walking through prosperity, hunger, and suffering with the Lord. It was beyond my understanding, but it was awesome. I can handle everything God allows through the strength that Christ provides.

[Remember to be content with what you have & where you are – 4:10-13]

# Content



Even though I am content with or without, you have done very well in sharing with me during my hard times. Thank you. Remember back when I first preached the Gospel there in Macedonia? You were the only church to give me gifts after I left there. You even provided for my needs more than once when I was ministering in Thessalonica. The important thing to me is not that I get gifts from you, but rather that you get blessed by God for your giving. Besides, the gift you sent with Epaphroditus is abundantly adequate to meet my current needs, and it is acceptable and pleasing to God. As a

result, my God will provide all your needs through the power and riches of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Remember to give wherever there is need – 4:14-19]

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I give thanks and praise to our God and Father because He is worthy of our praise forever. Amen. Extend greetings from me to all the Christians there in your area. The brothers and sisters here with me send their love and greetings, even those believers in the government and on Caesar's staff. The wonderful grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will strengthen and sustain you.

[Remember to keep in touch with other believers – 4:20-23]

