

## Lesson 7 – Philippians

Text: Acts 16; Philippians

Key Passages:

- Philippians 2:1-11 – Christians need to have the mind of Christ and imitate His humility.
- Philippians 2:14 – Do all things without complaining or disputing.
- Philippians 3:9-14 – Christians must always continue to reach forward and press on toward the goal.
- Philippians 4:13 – Paul could persevere through anything through the power of Christ

Background Information:

In addition to the other prison letters (Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon), the letter to the Philippians was also written while Paul was imprisoned in Rome (Philippians 1:7, 13, 17; 4:22). At the time of the writing (about 63 AD), it had been close to ten years since Paul had first been with the brethren in Philippi (Acts 16). Epaphroditus had brought Paul a gift from the Philippians (Philippians 2:25), and Paul seems to have written the epistle to encourage and thank them. Paul hoped to be released soon so that he could visit Philippi once again (Philippians 2:23-24), though he had no way of knowing if he would be released or not.

Outline:

- I. Purpose: to thank and express his affection for the Philippians while encouraging them to be rejoice and persevere through difficulties that they might face (as he was facing himself)
- II. Paul's thankfulness for the Philippians and his prayer for them (1:3-11)
  - a. Paul had great affection for the Philippians and prayed for them continually
  - b. He prayed that they would continue to grow in love, knowledge, and discernment even more
- III. Rejoice because the Gospel was being spread even more because of Paul's imprisonment (1:12-30)
  - a. The whole palace guard had become aware that Paul was a follower of Christ (1:13)
  - b. Others are preaching more boldly because of Paul's example (1:14-18)
    - i. Some are preaching from good will
    - ii. Some are preaching from envy and strife
    - iii. Regardless, Christ will be preached (1:18)
  - c. Paul recognized that good would come through Christ whether he lived or died (1:21-26)
  - d. Remain faithful and stand together during persecution (1:27-30)
- IV. Have the mind and attitude of Christ (2:1-11)
  - a. Be humble and put others before yourself (2:3-4)
  - b. Follow the example of Jesus (2:5-11)
- V. Shine as lights in the world (2:12-18)
- VI. Paul discusses Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30)
- VII. Beware of the false (Judaizing) teachers (3:1-21)
  - a. Those who worship God and rejoice in Christ are of the true "circumcision," not those who would just be circumcised in the flesh (or "mutilated") (3:1-3)
  - b. If anyone should be able to boast in the flesh, it would have been Paul (3:4-6)
  - c. Fleshly things are nothing compared to what Christ can offer (3:7-16)
  - d. Be careful of the false teachers (3:17-21)
    - i. Do not follow the false teachers, whose minds are set on earthly things (3:18-19)
    - ii. Our true citizenship is in Heaven (3:20)
    - iii. Christ will transform our bodies to be like His glorious body (3:21)
- VIII. Closing exhortations and encouragements (4:1-23)
  - a. Stand together, united in the mind of Christ (4:1-2)
  - b. Do not be anxious, but instead pray to the Lord (4:6-7)
  - c. Keep your minds on noble, heavenly things (4:8-9)
  - d. Paul had learned to be content; he persevered through the strength of Christ (4:10-13)