



Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

JOY IN CHRIST

Philippians 1:1-30

Inductive Discovery Lesson 14

Back when Paul first arrived in Rome as a prisoner, many of the local Christians came out to welcome him. *"When Paul saw them,"* Luke wrote, *"he thanked God and his spirits rose."* At first, curious visitors crowded into his small apartment and stayed all day. But then the weeks stretched into months. Life outside Paul's door went back to normal while Paul adapted to house arrest. It could not have been easy. Think of it—the old preacher who logged thousands of miles can only pace the width of his room. The missionary extrovert, so gifted at engaging crowds in meaningful conversation, must now wait for a knock at the door. But Paul didn't complain and he didn't just adapt—he thrived. *"I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am in."*

Have you ever wanted to encourage someone going through a difficult time, only to find that they cheer you? When the Philippians learned what their loved one was enduring, they did what they could to help. Paul's funds were running low, so they all chipped in. Epaphroditus made the long trip to deliver their gift and stay on as long as Paul needed him. This joyful letter of thanks and encouragement is Paul's heartfelt response.

Tracing Paul's Steps: *The Church in Philippi*

- On his second missionary journey, Paul hoped to visit more cities in Asia and Bithynia; but God clearly shut the door. Instead, Paul is called to preach the gospel in Macedonia. (Acts 16)
- Paul and Silas go to Philippi. They meet a small group of women praying by the riverside and Paul shares the gospel. A businesswoman named Lydia is converted and baptized. Soon others are saved and the church in Philippi is born. (Acts 16)
- When a demon-possessed slave girl is saved, her angry masters have Paul and Silas beaten and thrown into jail. They pray and sing to God while the other prisoners listen. At midnight, a violent earthquake breaks loose the prison chains and doors. Paul stops the jailer from killing himself and assures him no prisoners have escaped. The jailer is converted on the spot and takes Paul and Silas to his home. His family is saved; they are all baptized. (Acts 16)
- While Paul travels, the Philippian church continues to stay in touch. They love Paul and support his ministry, sending help as often as possible. (Philippians 4:16 & 2 Corinthians 11:9)
- Four or five years after Paul's last visit, the Philippians learn that Paul is a prisoner under house arrest in Rome. Anxious to help and eager for Paul to know they haven't forgotten him, the Philippians collect funds and send them to Paul by a messenger named Epaphroditus.

Working Text for Philippians 1:1-30
New King James Version (NKJV)

1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, **4** always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, **5** for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, **6** being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; **7** just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. **8** For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. **9** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, **10** that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, **11** being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, **13** so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; **14** and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. **15** Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: **16** The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; **17** but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. **18** What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, **20** according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. **21** For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. **22** But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. **23** For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. **24** Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. **25** And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, **26** that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, **28** and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. **29** For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, **30** having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.



Use the second column to record information you gather from other sources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps, etc. You can also use this section to jot down **your thoughts, impressions or questions that come to mind.** *Do your best to follow Paul's train of thought.* Does he emphasize a particular topic? Are his words urgent? Encouraging? Commanding? What issues or problems does he address? What questions does he ask?

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

4

Philippians 1:12-18

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

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Philippians 1:19-26

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

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Philippians 1:27-30

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

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Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Philippians 1:1-30

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“**joy**” (vs.4,25) _____

“**knowledge** and **discernment**” (vs.9) _____

“**suffer** for His sake” (vs.29) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to ***put it into action***.

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Philippians 1:1-11

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

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Philippians 1:12-18

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

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Philippians 1:19-26

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

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Philippians 1:27-30

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

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Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

For I am confident of this very thing,
that He who began a good work in you will complete it
until the day of Jesus Christ.
Philippians 1:6

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

Whatever God starts, He finishes—and what He does, He does well.¹

– Warren Wiersbe

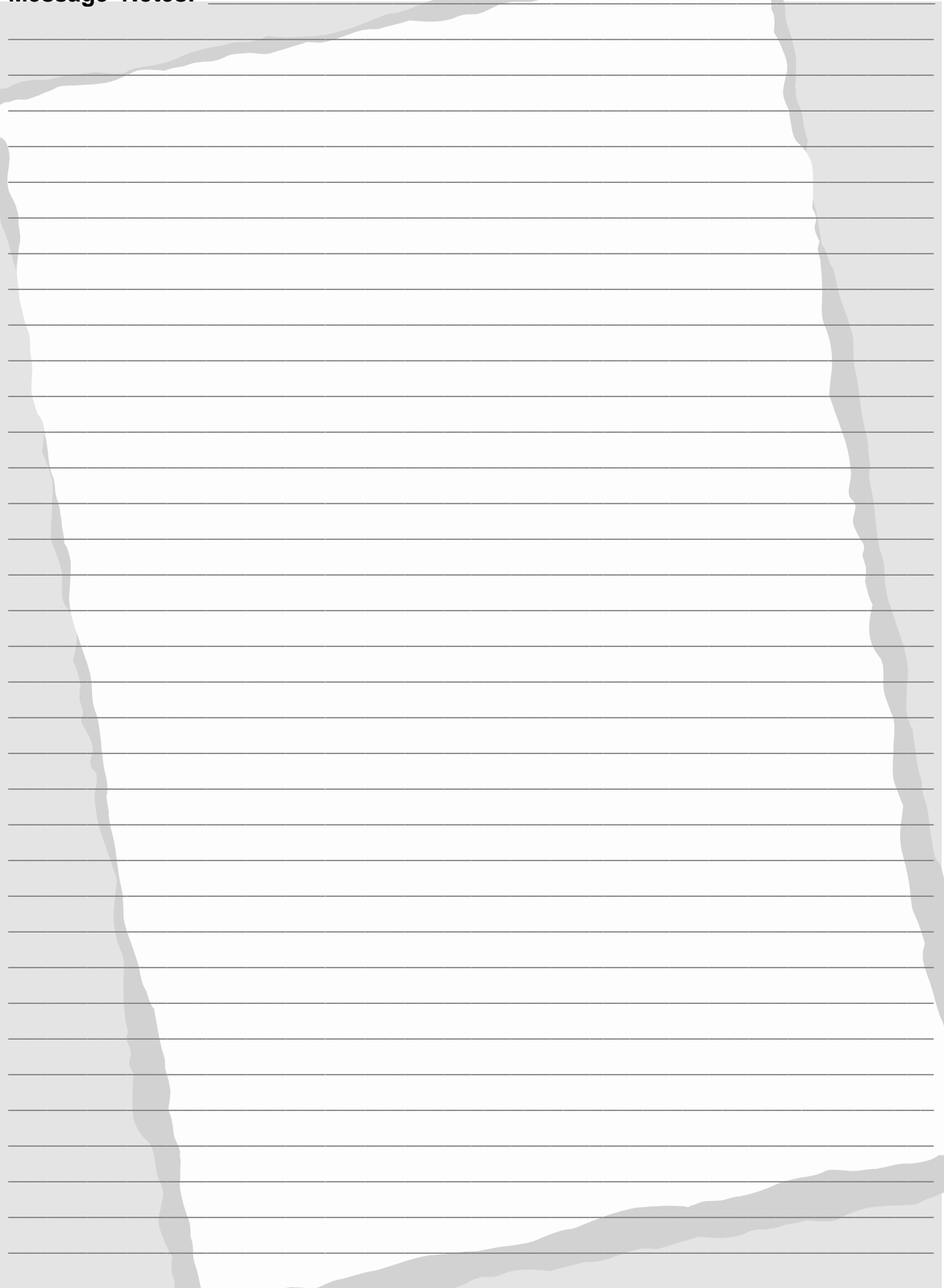


God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

¹ Warren Wiersbe, *Be Committed*

Message Notes:

A large rectangular area with horizontal lines, resembling a notepad or a message box. The left and bottom edges are irregular and torn, while the top and right edges are straight. The area is filled with light gray horizontal lines on a white background.



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