

Philippians

1. Author: The Apostle Paul
2. Setting: Written from a prison in Rome, around 60-62 A.D.
3. Occasion: Paul was in prison in Rome...about ten years after he had founded the Church in Philippi, and about 3-4 years after he had last visited there. Apparently (4:10), he had begun to wonder if they had forgotten him. Then Epaphroditus arrived from far away Philippi with an offering of money. Paul was deeply touched. Epaphroditus had nearly lost his life in the journey. Paul sent him to Philippi with this beautiful letter to express his thanks for their gift.
4. Key Text: Philippians 3:10 "My goal is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death."
5. Key Term: "Joy." Forms of the word "joy" and the verb "rejoice" occur 16 time in this short letter. Philippians is the biblical book that most extensively defines and describes joy.
6. One-Sentence Summary: Knowing Jesus Christ is much more joyful and important than anything else because God has exalted Jesus, the crucified Servant, with the name above every name.
7. History:
 - a. Named for Philip II of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great).
 - b. In Paul's day, it was a Roman colony located at the southeast corner of Europe in "Macedonia" in Biblical days; now in the northeastern part of modern-day Greece.
 - c. It was a strategic city on the Great Northern Highway between the East and the West, noted for its gold mines.
 - d. This was Paul's first European Church, founded around 51 A.D. in the early part of Paul's second missionary journey. Lydia and the Jailer were among the first converts. Luke, the beloved Physician, was its pastor the first 6 years. It may have been Luke's home, where he practiced medicine. Luke must have had a hand in the development of the unspotted character of the Church. As far as we know, the Philippian Church was one of the purest of New Testament Churches. For more on the background of the founding of the Church at Philippi, see Acts 16:6-40.
8. Read Acts 16:6-40 and look at its location on the map.
9. Look at the ancient Philippi archeology book.
10. For next week, read Chapter 1 of Philippians, and be prepared to share your insights.