

PRECEPT
UPON
PRECEPT®

Philippians

HOW TO HAVE JOY

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®

PHILIPPIANS
HOW TO HAVE JOY

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HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

How to Study Your Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010

The New Inductive Study Bible—New American Standard Bible

Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000

Greek Word Study Tools

RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

WALVOORD, JOHN F., ZUCK, ROY B., eds.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures

Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985

KENT, JR., HOMER A.; VAUGHN, CURTIS; AND RUPPRECHT, ARTHUR A.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996

MARTIN, RALPH P.

Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Philippians

Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987

WALVOORD, JOHN R.

Everyman's Bible Commentary: Philippians: Triumph in Christ

Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1971

MELICK, RICHARD R., JR.

The New American Commentary: Vol. 32—Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman and Holman Publishing Group, 1991

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

Logos Bible Software

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LESSON ONE

Overview

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES Observation Worksheets on Philippians, located in the Appendix

Philippians—a wellspring of spiritual truths that has brought countless believers new joy and peace in their daily walk. You will find Philippians a beautiful and a profitable book. It contains many principles of life that will literally transform your attitude toward people and circumstances as you become a doer of those things which you are about to learn in the next nine weeks.

You need to discipline yourself to study daily rather than cramming all your study into one sitting. To understand God’s truth there must be meditation and prayer. Joshua 1:8 says that we should meditate on God’s Word night and day so that we may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then we will make our way prosperous, and then we will have success. You may get right answers in one “cramming” session, but in all probability, you will miss many precious jewels of insight that come only through prayerful meditation.

DAY ONE

Inductive Bible study begins with the Bible itself. It is finding out what the Bible says. However, all the good study habits and methods in the world will mean very little to the student of God’s Word apart from the revelation of the Holy Spirit. John 14:26; John 16:13; and 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 teach us that it is the work of the indwelling Spirit to reveal and to guide us into all truth. So always begin with prayer, Beloved, asking God to guide you into His truth (John 16:13).

1. If you have never done a Precept course before, it might be helpful to read the chapters entitled “The Rule of Context—Context Rules!” and “Getting the Big Picture” in *How to Study Your Bible*.

The purpose of this first lesson is to discover the context of the book of Philippians. This lesson lays the foundation for all the other lessons. Since context rules interpretation and Scripture must always be interpreted in light of its context, the first step in your study of a letter (epistle) is to begin with the **Overview** (the view of the entire book) to discover the context.

Since Philippians is a letter, the place to begin your study is with the author because he is the first person mentioned in this book. Therefore, the first step in our study will be to identify what the book tells you about the author. Then as you evaluate these facts, you will begin to see the context of Philippians unfold right before your eyes. It's exciting and you are going to be awed by what you see.

2. Now let's begin. Read Philippians and mark in blue each mention of the author's name and the pronouns that refer specifically to him, such as *I*, *me*, *my*.

You can use the Observation Worksheets, located in the Appendix, for assignments. These Observation Worksheets are just what they say—worksheets. They contain the text of Philippians from the New American Standard Bible printed double-spaced. We encourage you to use these and then transfer the most important things to your Bible.¹

3. Now look at the places where you marked Paul in the text, and make a list of what Philippians says about him. Use the chart “The Author and Recipients of Philippians” at the end of this lesson to note what each chapter says about him. List only information about the author, not any instructions or commands. Do this before going on to number 4.
4. Although Philippians 1:1 opens with “Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints . . . ,” did you observe from the rest of the letter that the author was only one of them: Paul? If this is not clear, read Philippians 2:19 and remember that singular pronouns are used throughout the book.
5. On the chart entitled “Philippians at a Glance,” located at the end of the lesson, note anything you observe about the times in which this book is written. This helps you understand the **historical setting** of the book of Philippians.

As you continue to observe Philippians, you will glean more information that will help you complete this At a Glance chart.

Have you ever felt like you were in a prison of sorts, dear friend? Remember, not all prisons have bars and locked doors. Or maybe you have actually been in prison. When you look at Paul, who was in a very real prison, what does he exemplify? Do you think Paul's attitude was unique, or do you think it's possible for any believer to have this attitude no matter his or her prison? Can God work this attitude in all of us? Do you think Philippians tells us how? Think about it as you study this “freeing” letter.

¹ *The New Inductive Study Bible* is ideal for this. It is the best study Bible on the market because it doesn't tell you what the text means. Rather, it gives you instructions for studying each book of the Bible.

DAY
TWO

Today we'll continue to look at Philippians as a whole. Our study will still be focused on the people mentioned in the book because the people are easy to see.

1. Read all of Philippians and mark on your Observation Worksheets every mention of the **recipients** with orange. The recipients are the people who received this letter. Be sure to mark all of the pronouns for the recipients, such as *you, your, yourselves, who, whom*, and any synonyms, like *brethren* and *beloved*.
2. As you did yesterday for the author, list the facts (not instructions) you observe about the Philippians on the chart "The Author and Recipients of Philippians."
3. Did you observe anything about the Philippians relating to the historical setting (the times in which this letter was written) that needs to be added to that section of your "Philippians at a Glance" chart? If so, add it.

By marking the text and answering some **5 Ws and H** (who, what, when, where, why, how) kinds of questions about the author and the recipients, you have been able to discover certain facts about the historical setting of this book.

Do you realize what has just happened? So many times people think the only way to understand the historical setting of a book is to read commentaries, but they aren't aware that careful observation of the text can reveal this to you.

What a blessing this is for people who speak other languages who do not have commentaries in their language or easy access to them if they do exist.

4. What did the recipients do that might have prompted Paul to write this letter to them? Write your answer below.

How are you doing, dear friend? If this is your first Precept course, you may be panting at the pace and the work, but don't be discouraged. You are laying such a critical foundation, one that you'll be proud of in the right sense of the word. If you persevere, you'll find yourself building a mansion of joy that you can dwell in no matter what your circumstances, and it will be more than worth the discipline you have exercised. So press on, valiant one.

DAY
THREE
AND
DAY
FOUR

As you have probably observed, *Christ, rejoice/joy, mind/attitude* and their synonyms are used throughout Philippians. (A synonym is a word that has the same meaning as another word within a particular context.) Therefore, these are **key words** for this book.

Discovering key words is vital to your understanding of the meaning of a text. Like keys, key words “unlock” what a passage of Scripture is about. Observing key words and phrases is important because they help identify the author’s repeated emphasis and how he accomplishes his purpose for writing.

It will be helpful to make a **Key Word Bookmark** for Philippians. You might use the one on the back of your Precept book which has suggestions for marking frequently used words such as “Christ.” Write *Christ, joy/rejoice, and mind/attitude* on the blank side and mark each of these the way you want to mark them on your Observation Worksheets. You’ll add other key words as you continue to study.

1. Read Philippians and mark the key words *Christ* and *rejoice/joy*, along with their synonyms and pronouns.
2. Read Philippians again and mark *mind/attitude*.
3. On the page “Key Words in Philippians” at the end of this lesson, list what Paul says about *rejoice/joy* and what he says about *mind/attitude*. As you make your lists, be sure to note what is said regarding these key words in relation to *Christ*.
4. Record these key words on the “Philippians at a Glance” chart.

By the way, have you ever heard someone say, “The joy of the Lord is my strength”? Did you wonder what he or she was talking about? By the end of this study of Philippians you will not only know the answer but we pray you’ll be saying it yourself.

5. Did you notice any other key words (with their synonyms) repeated in all four chapters? If you noticed any key repeated words and their synonyms, record these below. Then read Philippians and mark the other key words you observed.
6. Read through Philippians to see what the author talks about the most. Pay attention to the key words you’ve marked.

7. In Philippians the key words *Christ* and *rejoice* are the main subjects or **themes** of the book. The theme of a book is the main subject(s) or topic(s) in the book.
 - a. Use words from the text to summarize the main themes of *Christ* and *rejoice/joy*. You might look at your list on these key words to see any possibilities. Consider the following:
 - 1) The theme should be based on an objective evaluation of what the author emphasizes through repetition, not just a subjective leaning toward what ministered the most to you.
 - 2) You do not have to “come up” with the theme. It should always be based on repetition in the book and its context.
 - b. Record the theme of Philippians in the appropriate location at the top of your “Philippians at a Glance” chart. When you have completed your chart, you will have a wonderful visual tool that will give you the main content of Philippians on one concise chart.

DAY FIVE

Part of the beauty of inductive Bible study is to look at what you have discovered out of only one source: God’s Word. Later in this study you may read some commentaries to check your work and to see what other people say. It will be exciting to see what you discovered all by yourself with just the Word, the Holy Spirit, and you.

1. For the last four days you have evaluated Philippians as a whole, and we rejoice over you. Our task today will be to look at the four chapters to observe how each chapter relates to the whole letter. So the next step is to identify the chapter theme for each chapter.
 - a. Read only chapter 1, looking for the theme of that chapter.

What is the chapter about? Use words from the text.

When you have identified the chapter theme, write it in the space for chapter 1 on your “Philippians at a Glance” chart.
 - b. Following the same process, read chapters 2–4 and identify the theme of each chapter. Then write each in the appropriate space on the At a Glance chart.

- c. Fill in any other information you learned from this week's study to complete the "Philippians at a Glance" chart.
2. Philippians has so much to teach us about the relationship believers have with the Lord Jesus Christ. As you study it, Beloved, make sure you have this relationship. Did you find your heart touched with a longing for a deeper intimacy that provokes the same words as Paul's when he said, "For to me, to live is Christ"?

Think about what God has taught you this week from your study of His Word. Ponder these things in your heart as you go about your day and turn it into an occasion for prayer.

Thank you, dear one, for your diligence in study this week. May our Lord reward you greatly by giving you great wisdom and understanding.

THE AUTHOR AND RECIPIENTS OF PHILIPPIANS

Author	Recipients

THE AUTHOR AND RECIPIENTS OF PHILIPPIANS

Author

Recipients

KEY WORDS IN PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPIANS AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Chapter Theme:

Author:

1

Date:

2

Key Words:

3

Purpose:

4

Historical Setting:

PHILIPPIANS 1
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

PAUL and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

- 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,
- 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all,
- 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.
- 6 *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.
- 7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.
- 8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.
- 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,
- 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;
- 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.
- 12 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel,

- 13 so that my imprisonment in *the cause of* Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else,
- 14 and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.
- 15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will;
- 16 the latter *do it* out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel;
- 17 the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.
- 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice.
- Yes, and I will rejoice,
- 19 for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but *that* with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted 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 am* to live *on* in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose.
- 23 But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better;
- 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

- 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all
for your progress and joy in the faith,
- 26 so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus
through my coming to you again.
- 27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so
that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you
that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together
for the faith of the gospel;
- 28 in no way alarmed by *your* opponents—which is a sign of destruction
for them, but of salvation for you, and that *too*, from God.
- 29 For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in
Him, but also to suffer for His sake,
- 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear *to*
be in me.

PHILIPPIANS 2

Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

- THEREFORE if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,
- 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.
 - 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;
 - 4 do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.
 - 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,
 - 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
 - 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.
 - 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
 - 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
 - 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 - 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;
- 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.
- 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing;
- 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,
- 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.
- 17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.
- 18 You too, *I urge you*, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.
- 19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.
- 20 For I have no one *else* of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.
- 21 For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.
- 22 But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child *servicing* his father.
- 23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things *go* with me;
- 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly.

- 25 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need;
- 26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.
- 27 For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow.
- 28 Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned *about you*.
- 29 Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard;
- 30 because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.

PHILIPPIANS 3
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

FINALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

- 2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;
- 3 for we are the *true* circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,
- 4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:
- 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;
- 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.
- 7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.
- 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,
- 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith,
- 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

- 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.
- 12 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.
- 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead,
- 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- 15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;
- 16 however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.
- 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.
- 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* enemies of the cross of Christ,
- 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* appetite, and *whose* glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.
- 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;
- 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

PHILIPPIANS 4
Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

THEREFORE, my beloved brethren whom I long *to see*, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.

- 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.
- 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in *the cause of* the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.
- 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!
- 5 Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. The Lord is near.
- 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- 8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.
- 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.
- 10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity.

- 11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.
- 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.
- 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.
- 14 Nevertheless, you have done well to share *with me* in my affliction.
- 15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;
- 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs.
- 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.
- 18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.
- 19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
- 20 Now to our God and Father *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.
- 21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you.
- 22 All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.
- 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.