

Lesson One
The Joy of Community
Philippians 1:1-11

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Thinking of Fellow Christians (1:3-6)
- Loving Fellow Christians (1:7-8)
- Praying for Fellow Christians (1:9-11)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- How did Paul remember and think of the Philippians (1:1-7)?
- What motivated Paul to love the Philippians (1:7-8)?
- What was Paul's prayer for the Philippians (1:9-11)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Reflect upon family members and friends that you do not see often. What comes to mind when you think of them?
How have they influenced you?
How have you influenced them?
How have they helped you and how can you help them grow in the Lord?
- List the qualities of godly people that remind you of Jesus.
- Consider ways that your life demonstrates the love of God, the wisdom of God, and your gratitude for God.
- What is your prayer for your church family and friends?

Lesson Two
The Joy of Hardships
Philippians 1:12-18

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Hardships Can Further the Gospel (1:12)
- Hardships Can Demonstrate Christ in Our Lives (1:13)
- Hardships Can Promote Confidence (1:14)
- Hardships Can Help Defend the Gospel (1:15-17)
- Hardships Can Exalt Jesus (1:18)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- What had Paul's personal suffering done for the kingdom (1:12-13)?
- How did Paul's suffering affect others, both in the Lord and outside of Christ (1:13-14)?
- Why did Paul rejoice in his suffering (1:15-18)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Reflect upon the most difficult times in your life.
How did God help you with the difficulties?
How did fellow Christians help you with the troubles?
How was Jesus glorified during the hardships?
What good came from the hardships?
- How can you help others that are going through difficult times?

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Lesson Three
The Joy of Purpose
Philippians 1:19-30

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- We Find Purpose in Magnifying Jesus (1:19-21)
- We Find Purpose in Serving Others (1:22-26)
- We Find Purpose in Maintaining Christian Lifestyles (1:27-30).

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- What did Paul see as his purpose in life (1:19-21)?
- What did Paul determine was best for the Lord's church (1:22-26)?
- What keys did Paul give for living worthy lives (1:27-30)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Think about the most difficult decisions that you have had to make.
List all the factors that were considered in making the decision.
In making those decisions how did your relationship with Jesus factor in?
When the decision was made, were you confident in your decision?
- As of today, what is your purpose in the kingdom of God?
What are you doing in life to fulfill that purpose?

Lesson Four
The Joy of Unity
Philippians 2:1-4

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Unity is Found in Christ's Encouragement (2:1a)
- Unity is Found in God's Spirit (2:1b)
- Unity is Found in Love For One Another (2:1c)
- Unity is Found in Cooperation (2:2)
- Unity is Found in Considering Other's Needs (2:3-4)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- List three keys to establishing unity in the body (2:1).
- How does being like-minded produce joy (2:2)?
- How does selflessness promote unity and harmony (2:3-4)?
- What things should be avoided to maintain unity (2:3-4)?
- What things should be practiced to maintain unity (2:3-4)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Consider how Jesus encourages us to find unity and harmony with others.
What do we share in common with Jesus?
What do we share in common with others through Jesus?
How can we follow the example of Jesus to teach others about selfless service?
- Compare your selfish actions to your selfless actions.
What was the outcome of your selfish actions?
What was the benefit to your selfless actions?
- Write specific examples of when your selfless behavior helped the body of Christ or helped families come together.

Lesson Five
The Joy of Obedience
Philippians 2:5-18

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- The Pattern of Jesus (2:5-11) – Six Actions of Jesus
 - Abdication of His Position (5-6) – Jesus gave up his position in heaven.
 - Abstain from Privilege (7a) – He emptied Himself
 - Attending to Others (7b) – He became a bondservant.
 - Acting with Humility (8a) – He made Himself low.
 - Accepted the Cross (8b) – He died that we might live.
 - Abounded in Glory (9-11) – His humility lead to exaltation.
- The Practice of Jesus' Example (2:12-18)
 - Complete the Race (12) – Work out your own salvation.
 - Commit to God's Power (13) – God working through us.
 - Cease Complaining (14) – Thanksgiving is in the heart of Christians.
 - Chaste and Pure Behavior (15) – To shine as a light to others.
 - Cling to the Word (16) – Being guided by God's word.
 - Compassion for Others (17) – Service for others to the glory of God.

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- What did Jesus do to demonstrate His obedience (2:5-8)?
- What did God do for Jesus because of Jesus' obedience (2:9-11)?
- How should we approach obedience to the Lord (2:12-13)?
- What should we do in order to be a positive influence on the world (2:14-18)?

Journal Suggestions:

- How can you do to have the mindset of Jesus?
Who or what must you consider in order to follow Jesus' pattern of obedience? What are you willing to sacrifice in order to please God?
How much of yourself have you given to God?
How much of yourself do you give to others?
- Are you a complainer?
What should you do in order to avoid complaining about things in life?
Think about the solutions to the things that you complain about.
- What do you do to reflect the light of Jesus to others?

Lesson Six
The Joy of Example
Philippians 2:19-30

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Our Example of Joyful Living (2:19)
- Our Example of Concern (2:20-21)
- Our Example of Godly Character (2:22)
- Our Example of Helpful Attitudes (2:25)
- Our Example of Commitment (2:26-30)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- Why was Timothy so encouraging to Paul (2:19-21)?
- Describe the relationship of Paul and Timothy (2:22-24).
- How did Paul describe Epaphroditus (2:25)?
- What was so amazing about Epaphroditus (2:26-30)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Why is your example so important?
- How do you bring joy and comfort to others?
- In what ways have you demonstrated a commitment to Christ?
- In what ways do yourself in Paul's description of Epaphroditus (2:25)?
- How can you be a better brother, a worker, a soldier, a messenger, and a servant?
- List some ways that your spiritual progress is evident to all.

Lesson Seven
The Joy of Priority
Philippians 3:1-11

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Be Careful When Establishing Priorities (3:1-3a)
- Be Mindful of Your Abilities (3:3a-6)
- Place Emphasis on the Right Things (3:7-9)
- Have a Great Desire to Know Jesus (3:10-11)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- What credentials does Paul possess and what did those mean in his time (3:1-6)?
- How did Paul view his earthly accomplishments (3:7-9)?
- What did Paul want to know about Jesus (3:10-11)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Think about your accomplishments in life so far.
How have those accomplishments brought you closer to the Lord?
Have those accomplishments taken you away from the Lord?
Would you be willing to leave those behind to serve God more affectively?
- What questions would you ask Jesus in order to get to know Him better?
What could you tell others about Jesus?
How does knowing about Jesus help is in our daily lives

Lesson Eight
The Joy of Progress
Philippians 3:12-21

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Don't Be Content With Your Spiritual Growth (3:12-13a)
- Be Devoted Completely to God (3:13b)
- Put the Past Behind (3:13c)
- Be Confident in the Futures (3:14)
- Practice Self-Discipline (3:15-19)
- Keep Heaven in Mind (3:20-21)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- What had Paul realized about his own spiritual maturity (3:12-13)?
- What was Paul's "one thing" (3:13-14)?
- What are some signs of maturity (3:15-19)?
- Where is our true citizenship (3:20)?
- Why should we look forward to the return of Jesus (3:21)?

Journal Suggestions:

- What things in the past do you need to let go of?
Who and what can help you to move forward in your life?
How do you view the future?
- What are your impressions of heaven?
Describe what being in the presence of Jesus would mean to you.
- Think about what you need to do in order to grow in the Lord.
How can your growth help others grow?

Lesson Nine
The Joy of Proper Thinking
Philippians 4:1-9

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Take Confidence in God (4:1)
- Strive for Peace (4:2-5)
- Seeks God's Help (4:6-7)
- Stay Focused on What is Good (4:8)
- Follow the Good Example of Others (4:9)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- What did the church in Philippi mean to Paul (4:1)?
- What problem did Paul bring to the attention of one of his companions (4:2-3)?
- Why is prayer so important (4:6-7)?
- What specific things fit the categories that Paul encouraged us to meditate upon (4:8)?
- Why should we follow the example of others (4:9)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Think of the conflicts that have experienced in life.
Were you the cause of the conflicts?
Did you just try to ignore the situation?
What did you do to help find peace?
How did you involve God in the resolution of the conflict?
- Are you a worrier?
What things do you worry about?
How do you deal with the worries of life?
How did Jesus deal with troublesome situations in life?
- What can you do to keep your mind on the good things in life?

Lesson Ten
The Joy of Contentment
Philippians 4:10-20

Things to read, discuss, and meditate upon:

Basic Outline of the Text:

- Concentrate On Others (4:10)
- Contentment Is Not Dependant on Circumstances (4:11-12)
- Jesus Gives Us Power to Work Through Life (4:13)
- Sharing with Others Helps Us Be Content (4:14-18)
- God Provides Everything We Need (4:19-20)

Discussion Questions and Meditation Thoughts:

- Why did Paul commend the church in Philippi (4:10)?
- How did Paul learn contentment (4:11-13)?
- How did the Philippians share in Paul's work (4:14-18)?
- What did Paul promise that God would do for us (4:19-20)?

Journal Suggestions:

- Are you content with God's provisions?
In what areas of life do you lack contentment?
How can God and fellow Christians help you find contentment?
- Reflect upon the life of Jesus.
Where did Jesus find His strength?
How can looking at the life of Jesus help you find contentment?
How can His strength become your strength?
How can God use you to strengthen others?