

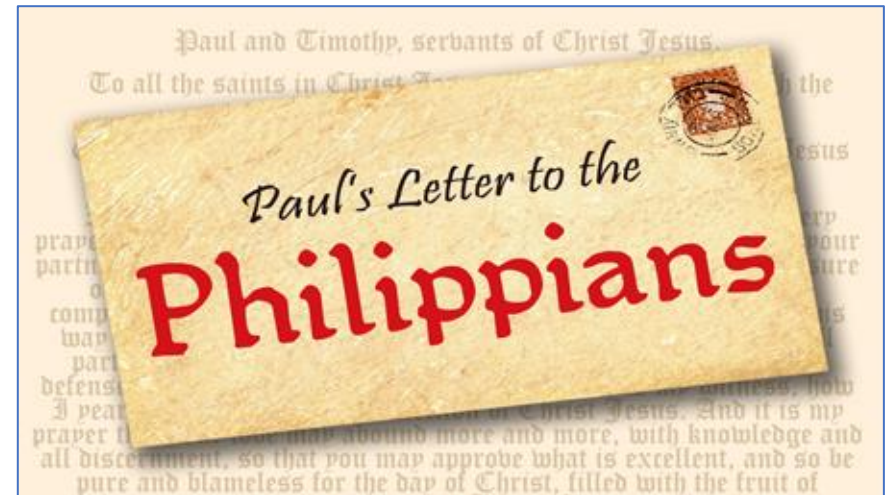
STUDY QUESTIONS

- 1) What are we to learn from the way Paul introduces himself and Timothy in verse 1?
- 2) Paul is writing to 'saints'. How are we to understand this title?
- 3) How would you explain 'grace' and 'peace' in verse 2?
- 4) What do verses 3-5 tell us about Paul's relationship with the Philippians?
- 5) According to verse 6, what is the confidence we should have as Christians?
- 6) What can happen in our lives that can make this confidence difficult to hold on to?

"I press on toward the goal"

INTRODUCTION & STUDY 1

Reading: Philippians 1:1-6



*"To all the saints in Christ
Jesus..."*

Home Fellowship Group Bible Study Questions

Tuesday 9th/Wednesday 10th January 2018

Introduction to Philippians

Situated in north eastern Greece; Philippi was a Roman Colony. This gave it special status as 'a little bit of Rome abroad'. The Roman language was spoken; it's residents had Roman citizenship and were protected by Roman law.

About 10 miles inland, it was commercially strategic. Straddling the great trade route which ran from the Adriatic to the Aegean Seas, Philippi was known as the gateway to Europe. It had a cosmopolitan population and consequently a fusion of pagan religions.

Paul visited Philippi during his second missionary journey around AD50 (Acts 16). There he found a small Jewish population. That's where Paul begins his gospel work; although the gospel is also for the Gentiles. Lydia becomes the first believer in Philippi; followed by her household. They are baptised and meet in Lydia's home, becoming the first Christian church in Europe.

Reading on in Acts 16 we see the church growing; despite much opposition. Paul and Silas are beaten and imprisoned. But even then, the church grows with the dramatic conversion of the Philippian jailor and his family. **Do take the opportunity to read Acts 16 as we begin this new series.**

Luke is left in Philippi to encourage this fledgling church. (The 'we' of the narrative chapter 16 becomes the 'they' in chapter 17-19). In Acts 20 Paul returns to Philippi during his third missionary journey; after which, Luke leaves with him (Acts 20:6 'we').

Twelve years after he first arrived in Philippi, Paul writes this letter from prison in Rome (Acts 28).

Firstly, to acknowledge a gift received from the church. He is grateful for the loving concern that they have for him; demonstrated in their sending Epaphroditus to minister to him (4:10-18).

But this is more than a thankyou letter. He wants to update them concerning his own situation; and encourage them about the progress of

the gospel, despite his own suffering. What he is enduring is far from being a setback for the cause of the gospel.

Paul also writes to encourage the believers in their faith; for which they too are also suffering (1:30). The letter is full of practical issues of Christian living. They are to stand firm against false teachers. They are to be united in fellowship. They are to continue to be a beacon for the gospel. They are to experience Christian joy; a theme Paul regularly refers to in this letter.

In this series we join these believers as they open this letter and discover the great themes that will enrich their faith in Jesus Christ.

Suggested further study:

Books:

New Bible Commentary (IVP)

'Philippians: Rejoicing and Thanksgiving' by David Chapman (Focus on the Bible)

'For the sake of the Gospel' by Hywel R Jones (Welwyn Commentaries)

'Philippians' by Ralph P Martin (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries)

Online:

Matthew Henry
www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete

John Calvin
www.studydrive.org/commentaries/cal.html