

TOO OFTEN WE SETTLE FOR HAPPINESS WHEN WE COULD HAVE JOY!

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**PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS**

**1:1-19 OPENING PRAYER**  
 I thank God always for you, because of the love you have for me in Christ Jesus. (1:1-2)

**1:12-26 PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT**  
 I am glad because of you, because of the love you have for me in Christ Jesus. (1:12-13)

**2:1-18 FOLLOWING JESUS' EXAMPLE**  
 I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether I am well or ill, whether I am hungry or full, whether I am cold or warm. (2:1-2)

**2:6-11 THE MESSIAH POEM**  
 Although he existed in the nature of God, he did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped. (2:6-7)

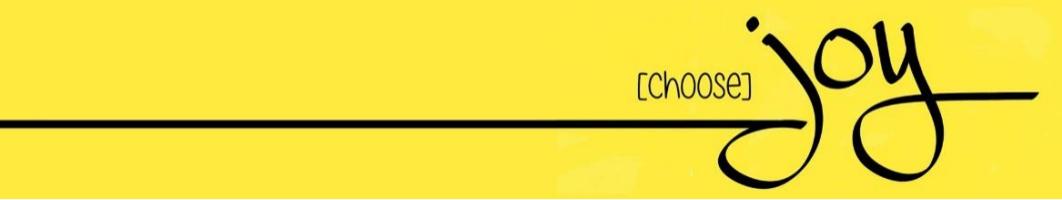
**2:19-30 PAUL'S EXAMPLE**  
 I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether I am well or ill, whether I am hungry or full, whether I am cold or warm. (2:19-20)

**4:10-23 CLOSING THANKS**  
 I thank you very much for your love and faith in Christ Jesus. (4:10-11)

**3:1-4:1 PAUL'S EXAMPLE**  
 I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether I am well or ill, whether I am hungry or full, whether I am cold or warm. (3:1-2)

**A UNIQUE WINDOW INTO PAUL'S HEART & MIND**  
 • HE SAID HE LIVED AS A RENUNCIATION OF JESUS' SINCE  
 • HIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF JESUS' LOVE & RESURRECTION GAVE HIM HOPE & HAPPINESS  
 • KNOWING JESUS IS BETTER THAN SIN & REASSURANCE

# The Epistle to the Philippians

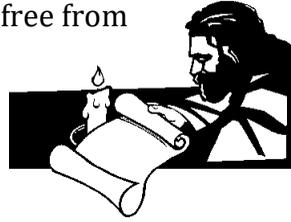


Philippians is a letter to a young church in northern Greece, the first church ever planted in Europe after an exciting visit there by Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke. Paul originally didn't want to go there, as he wanted to continue the ministry in Asia Minor where he had already successfully planted many churches. However, the Holy Spirit kept them from continuing on there, and instead pushed them westward toward Europe to the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth. The exciting story of how the Gospel came to Philippi is told by Luke in Acts 16.

## Paul's Second Missionary Journey



Paul wrote this letter from a Roman prison to the church in Philippi, an important city on the *Via Egnatia*, the highway leading from Western Greece to modern day Istanbul in the East. As a leading city in Macedonia it was a Roman Colony free from taxes, prosperous and somewhat autonomous, but fiercely loyal to Rome because her citizens enjoyed Roman citizenship.



### Cast of Key Players in Philippians

- The **Author** – The Apostle Paul, along with Timothy
- The **Holy Spirit** – He is the one who directed the missionaries to leave Asia Minor and to go Europe (really, against their will); and the one who directed Paul to write this Epistle
- **Timothy** – Paul’s coworker, who had joined the team in Lystra
- **Epaphroditus** – Paul’s coworker, he delivered the original manuscript of Philippians to its original recipients, the church in Philippi, and answered their questions about its message
- **Caesar’s household** – under arrest, Paul’s witness to the Gospel had an amazing effect on the Praetorian Guard, a cause for joy
- Who were **the Philippians**? Paul’s spiritual children, and financial donors to his ministry travels. They included:
  - **Lydia** – a wealthy businesswoman who opened her heart to Christ; her home was the meeting place for the church
  - **The young slave girl** – her conversion from a demon possessed sorceress created an uproar in the town of Philippi
  - **The warden** – he couldn’t believe that his prisoners would not escape after an earthquake, so he pleaded with Paul, ‘*What must I do to be saved?*’ He was “filled with joy” when he trusted Christ (Acts 16:25-34)
  - **Syntyche and Euodia** – two women leaders in the church who were having a dispute. Conflict is a real problem in this church.

### An Early Church Hymn

The church in Philippi was suffering from a crisis of conflict among their leaders at the same time they faced external conflict from their culture’s emperor worship. In Phil. 2:5–11 Paul quotes a hymn that the early church sang, which presents Christ in stark contrast to emperor. The ‘Christ Hymn’ provides both a powerful insight into the mind of Christ and a counter-model for how a true leader behaves.



### Good questions to ask when studying passages in Philippians:

1. Does this passage talk about any possible sources of joy?
2. What did the Holy Spirit want the people of Philippi to know, to feel or to do after reading this part of the letter?
3. What does the Holy Spirit want me to understand, feel or do after reading this passage?



Artist's Conception of Philippi based on archaeological discoveries