

# Philippians – Study Questions

## Lesson 1 - Introduction and Background

Philippi, the main city of first century Macedonia was located on the Aegean Sea. The soil of the area was rich and fertile and there were lucrative gold and silver mines, but its main value was its strategic location as a trade route between Europe and Asia. It was conquered by the Roman empire in 42 B.C.

Philippi was influenced by the culture of both Greece and Rome. The Greek influence was strong as Greek was the main language spoken by the common people. Because it was a Roman colony, however, Latin was the official language. The personality of the people tended more toward the straightforward, wholehearted Roman love of life as opposed to the ever learning, skeptical aloofness of the Greek. Philippi was proud to be Roman!

Paul started the Philippian church in 52 A.D. during his second missionary journey. He was accompanied by Luke, Silas, and Timothy. Paul's usual practice, upon entering a new city was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath and preach, but Philippi had no synagogue. Since it was primarily a military city, the Jewish population was very small.

**All the following is optional for those who would like to dig a little deeper into God's Word. It is for your own edification and personal growth.**

1. This week's memory passage is Philippians 2:5-7:

*"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men."*

- Why not write it on an index card and put it where you will see it often, or in a Notes app on your phone? Don't just memorize it, but rather **meditate on it**. Read the Scripture, think on it, pray about it, and ask the Lord to speak to you about it.
2. Read the entire book of Philippians. As you read each chapter and using the chart below, write down **key words**/subjects and **themes/titles**. **Key words** are words or topics which are repeated or emphasized and help us to identify the general topics of the book. **Themes/titles** are brief sentences that best describes the chapter. (Be sure to note the biblical reference.) Completing this chart will give you a general overview that will be helpful as you study the entire book.

Chapter	Key Words/Subjects (Words or topics repeated or emphasized)	Theme/Title (A brief sentence that best describes the chapter)
1		

[Type here]

2		
3		
4		

3. Referring to the key words and themes you recorded above, what do you think is the main theme of the book?

- What is the most important subject?
- If somebody were to ask you what Philippians was about, what would you tell them?

4. Read Acts 16. Briefly list the background information given about Paul's visit to Philippi.

- How does this information help you to better understand Philippians?

[Type here]

5. What do you learn from this chapter regarding the following topics? What other Scriptures can you find that give additional insight into these topics? Be sure to note the biblical reference.

- Being led by the Holy Spirit

- Trials and persecution

- Sharing the gospel

- Lessons from Paul's life

# Philippians – Discussion Questions

## Lesson 1

1. In Acts 16:6-7 the Holy Spirit forbade Paul to go to Asia to preach the Good news. Why?
  - Share an experience (if you have one) where the Holy Spirit prevented you from doing something you believed to be right and good.
  
2. How did the Holy Spirit redirect Paul's plans in Acts 16:6-12?
  - Give one example of how the Lord has led you to change your plans. What was the outcome?
  
  - Give a few examples of how the Holy Spirit leads us.
  
3. What word describes Paul's obedience to God's leading in Acts 16:10? What word or phrase best describes your obedience?

*"Delayed obedience is disobedience. Partial obedience is disobedience.*

*Doing what God says with murmuring is disobedience."*

*Joy Dawson*

4. In Acts 16:13 it says that women met regularly near the river for prayer. Is fellowship with other believers important to you? Why or why not?
  - How has the recent "social isolation" affected you?
  
5. In Acts 16:15 Lydia offered hospitality to Paul and his companions. Define "hospitality".
  - Give some examples of hospitality and how it has blessed you.

6. What was Paul and Silas' attitude while they were jailed in Philippi in Acts 16:25? What were they doing?
- How does *your* response to trials compare to theirs?
  - Who is listening to/watching you in trials?
  - How might your attitude/behavior affect others?
7. The words "joy" and "rejoice" are found in every chapter of Philippians. How can believers experience joy in the midst of a troubled world and trials?
- Give one example of something that is currently bringing you joy.

*"If you master the truths in Philippians,  
you should be filled with joy as you live the Christian life."  
Warren Weirsbe*

8. Paul wrote Philippians from a Roman prison, yet the central theme of the letter is joy. If you were to write a letter describing the last 6 months of your life, what would the central theme be and what words would you use most often?
9. What would you like to see the Lord do in your life as you study the book of Philippians? Write out your prayer request.