

A Study of the Epistles of Paul

(NT Survey Lesson 172--Philippians 1)

Introduction: The key word in Philippians is "joy". Paul uses it repeatedly as he discusses the many areas where being a Christian brings us joy. Paul often expresses this joy in terms of his own personal experiences. It is remarkable that Paul could write a book about his joy in the Lord while being a prisoner in Rome.

Lesson aim: To encourage all of us to rejoice in God's people, in difficult circumstances, and in spiritual conflict.

The joy of loving God's people--Phil. 1:3-11

1. What did Paul remember about the Philippians?
2. Of what was Paul confident? (v. 6)
3. Why did Paul love the Philippians so much? How did he express that love to them?
4. Paul prayed that the love of the Philippians would abound in what? How would their lives be changed by this? What would be the end result of this at the coming of the Lord?

Rejoicing in difficult circumstances--Phil. 1:12-26

1. What were Paul's circumstances at the writing of this letter? How had they turned out for the greater progress of the gospel?
2. What bad things were happening to Paul that were working out for good? Why could Paul rejoice even in these things?
3. What does Paul mean: "For me to live is Christ"? In what way is death "gain"?
4. For Paul what were the advantages of living? Of dying?

5. Was Paul optimistic or pessimistic about his future release from prison?
On what basis?

Rejoicing in spiritual conflict--Phil. 1:27-30

1. How did Paul command the Philippians to conduct themselves?
2. With what attitudes were they to stand firm for the Lord?
3. Persecution was a sign of what for unbelievers? For believers?
4. What had God granted to the Philippians? Were they the only ones to suffer for Christ?