

**Twelve Lessons**

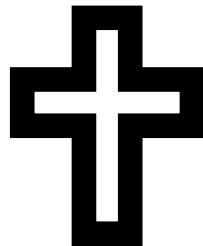
*on*

***Philippians***

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## **THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE BELIEVER – LESSON 1**

### **Philippians 1:1-6**

**Introduction:** Philippians is a book of joy written by Paul while imprisoned. It teaches us that we can have joy in spite of any situation we may find ourselves in. Chapter one teaches us how to have joy in spite of circumstances. One of the sources of Paul's joy was the fellowship he had with the believers in Philippi. The word "fellowship," *koinonia*, means "a joint-participation in a common interest and activity." This should be one the great sources of joy in our life – the common interests and activities of the church. Before we get started, we need to do a brief overview of the book.

1. Theme – Christian Experience – Soundness of doctrine is assumed.
2. Setting – Nero's prison – The circumstances of the apostle are in striking contrast with his Christian experience. Joy is not based on what is going on around the believer, but something which is going on within him.
3. Key Verse – 1:21 – "*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*"
4. The Divisions:
  - a. Christ, the believer's life – Rejoicing in Suffering – 1:1-30
  - b. Christ, the believer's pattern – Rejoicing in Lowly Service – 2:1-30
  - c. Christ, the believer's object – Rejoicing despite Imperfections – 3:1-21
  - d. Christ, the believer's strength – Rejoicing over Anxiety – 4:1-23
5. The Writer had two names: Saul which means "to ask or pray," His Hebrew name and Paul, coming from the Latin, meaning "little," his Gentile name.
6. Timotheus – Combination of two Greek words which together means "he who honors God."
7. Servants – *doulos* – bond slaves – loving relationship
  - a. The Master is Responsible for His slaves needs – Matt. 6:24-5, Phil. 4:19
  - b. The Master is Responsible for His slaves duties.
  - c. The Master is Responsible for His slaves Supplies.
8. Saints – Who were the first converts?
  - a. Lydia – An Asian who had become a proselyte to Judaism, successful in the business world and of some social standing, came to know Jesus as Saviour.
  - b. A slave girl – Whose religion was demonism, who had no social standing, owned by others.
  - c. A Roman Official – A jailor, a role with little class or social standing. His religion was Emperor Worship.
9. Salutation – vs. 2 – "*Grace be unto you, and peace.*"
  - a. "*Grace*" – The word in its use among the pagan Greeks is referred to a favor done by one Greek to another out of the pure generosity of his heart, and with no hope of reward. BUT, in the case of the Greek, the favor was done to a friend, never to an enemy. In the case of God it was an enemy, the sinner, bitter in his hatred of God, for whom the favor was done. God has no strings tied to the salvation He procured for man at the Cross. Salvation is given to the believing sinner out of the pure generosity of God's heart. The Greek word referred to an action that was beyond the ordinary course of what might be expected.
  - b. "*Peace*" – in classical Greek means "to bind together". Spiritually, it is the operation of God's grace in binding the believing sinner to God and His life again, this operation continued in bringing that believer in his experience more and more into harmony with God in his life and service.
10. Alliterated Outline: The whole book
  - Philippians – The Joyful Christian Mind
    - I. THE SINGLE MIND – chapter 1 – Joy in Spite of Circumstances
    - II. THE SUBMISSIVE MIND – chapter 2 – Joy in Spite of People
    - III. THE SPIRITUAL MIND – chapter 3 – Joy in Spite of Things
    - IV. THE SECURE MIND – chapter 4 – Joy in Spite of Worry

### **Lesson Goals:**

1. To get a brief overview of the book of Philippians.
2. Study four aspects of the fellowship Paul had with the church at Philippi and make practical application.

### **Definitions of Important Terms/Phrases:**

1. Consistency – Standing together or in agreement; compatible; congruous; uniform; not contradictory or opposed; as, two opinions or schemes are consistent;
2. Perseverance – The steadfast effort to follow God's commands and to do His work. The New Testament makes it

clear that faith alone can save. But it makes it equally clear that perseverance in doing good works is the greatest indication that an individual's faith is genuine (James 2:14-26). Indeed, perseverance springs from a faithful trust that God has been steadfast toward His people. Through persevering in God's work, the Christian proves his deep appreciation for God's saving grace (I Cor. 15:57-58).

**I. THE FELLOWSHIP OF REMEMBRANCE** – vs.3 – *“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.”* Our fellowship should create two actions in our lives.

**A. Thanksgiving** – *“I thank my God...”* – The Philippian Church was the basis of Paul's thanksgiving.

1. It is interesting that Paul uses personal pronouns like “I” and “my” indicating that it came from his heart not a consensus of people.
2. He says that he thanked his God, intimating that the conduct of the Philippians was a proof of the favor of God to him; that is, he regarded their piety as one of the tokens of the favor of God to his own soul – for in producing that piety he had been mainly instrumental.

**B. Thoughts** – *“upon every remembrance of you”*

1. Since they were his converts, every time he thought about them, he thanked God for having a part in their being saved.
2. The soulwinner and the souls won have closeness beyond the rest of the Church. In fact John said *“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth”*.

**II. THE FELLOWSHIP OF REQUESTS** – vs. 4

**A. The Consistency** – *“Always in every prayer of mine for you all”*

1. “Always” according to Strong’s is “at all times, every when”. Paul had a consistent prayer life. It is the same word used in connection with prayer in Eph. 6:18, Col. 1:3, II Thess. 1:11 and Philemon 4.
2. “In every prayer of mine” implies that they were a matter of consistent prayer. It implies that he bore them on his heart and could not forget them.

**B. The Content** – *“Making request with joy”*

1. Request – There is a fellowship between believers who pray for each other. James 5:16 – *“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.”*
2. Rejoicing – *“with joy”* – It is one thing to pray with a burden and quite another to pray with joy. Their fellowship was such a blessing to Paul that it spilled over into his prayer life – He could not pray for them without being overjoyed.

**III. THE FELLOWSHIP OF RESPONSE** – vs.5

**A. Their Fellowship** – *“For your fellowship in the gospel”*

1. These Philippians were not just sympathetic to Paul's ministry but had responded financially and were helping bear the load. They were joint-participators with Paul in a common interest and activity, that of preaching the gospel.
2. “In” is a preposition of motion. This common interest and activity was in the progress of the gospel. The Philippians supported Paul with their prayers and finances. This brought about a close fellowship with the Church and Paul.

**B. Their Faithfulness** – *“From the first day until now”* – They had consistently supported Paul monetarily and prayerfully – Two responsibilities all church members should embrace. Nothing brings joy to a preacher or pastor more than faithfulness!

**IV. THE FELLOWSHIP OF REDEMPTION** – vs. 6

**A. The Confidence** – *“Being confident”*

1. The word “confident” implies that Paul had come to a settled persuasion.
2. The settled persuasion was not based on their faithfulness to Christ as much as it was in His faithfulness to continue that which He started in them. Our continuance is not based on our performance but on His promise!

**B. The Context** – *“That he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”*

1. The context of this verse is saying that Paul had come to a settled persuasion concerning the fact that the God who had begun in the Philippians the good work of giving to missions, would bring it to a successful conclusion right up to the day of Christ Jesus.
2. Practically – There is a closeness between a Pastor and a Church or between Church members when they see God working perseverance in the lives of other Christians. It is hard to fellowship with a Christian who is inconsistent.