

PHILIPPIANS

AUTHOR: The Apostle, Paul. He called himself a servant/bond slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit used Paul to write epistles/letters to the early churches, which were gathered mainly from the Gentiles. Some Jews did unite with the local assemblies. Paul was in prison in Rome when he wrote this book. Yet, he was happy and content!

PHILIPPI: A chief city of Macedonia/northern Greece. It was quite important – in that it was a crossroad city lying on one of the main routes between Europe and Asia. The church was planted in Philippi around A.D. 50 during Paul's second missionary journey – and his first act on European soil. The city was named after Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great. You can read about the church's founding in ACTS 16:12-40. Paul and Silas were abused there and placed in prison. Yet the men sang praises and prayed. The Philippian Jail became a place of revival! Even the jailer and his family got saved! In spite of much persecution by the unbelieving city folks – and the Devil, the young church grew and prospered! Paul mentioned in his letter to the Thessalonians that though they were shamefully treated and suffered much at Philippi, "We were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention." (I THESS. 2:2).

Dr. Oliver B. Greene wrote: "Jesus is the center of Christianity – the point around which all of God's truth is centered. In view of this, it is not strange that the key verse of Philippians is 3:8: 'Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung/refuse, that I may win Christ.' "Greene continues: "The theme of PHILIPPIANS is that believers should disregard things of Earth and count all things loss in order to win Christ – not that we win salvation through good works, but that we should obtain the fullness of life by losing all things on Earth in order to have a greater hold on eternal things – and that we might glorify Jesus by bearing much fruit. We should strive to win a good race and win the crown, fighting a good battle as soldiers of the cross, and we should be good husbandmen/workers in God's vineyard."

The Philippians remained true and faithful to the truth of God's Word – in spite of trials, heartaches, tribulations and persecutions. When Paul wrote to them there was little error to correct. The believers were good examples of what born again people should be like. Paul gave sincere thanks to the church for the gifts they had sent to him in prison by Epaphroditus. The basic theme of the letter is joy – which is found in 16 places.

This letter is addressed to all the believers/saints in Christ Jesus – which are at Philippi – including the bishops and deacons in the church. All believers become saints when they repent and place their faith and trust in the only Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ – Who died for them and rose again! All believers are to live like saints with the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit. My life verses are: 1:20-21: "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." I also particularly like 4:13, 19: "I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me...My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

May God bless you richly as you diligently study this portion of His holy Word!!
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