

# *Love Letters*

## **Philippians 1**

### **Fast Facts ~**

- Paul's letter was written from a Roman prison to the Christians in Philippi, located in the northern part of Greece near the Aegean Sea. The city was a Roman colony whose citizens enjoyed the privileges of Roman citizenship; but along with that came the influences of pagan religions.
- The church itself had special significance to Paul, being the first he founded in Europe (Acts 16). The Philippian jailor & his family along with Lydia (a seller of purple goods) & her family were among the first to make this church their home.
- Epaphroditus is thought to possibly have been the pastor of the church. He visited Paul in prison to present him a financial gift & to encourage him.
- The overriding theme of this letter is encouragement to one another in service to God. It is a letter of thanks to the believers in this congregation for their generous financial support of Paul, along with a practical exhortation addressed to their specific issues.

### **Read Philippians 1**

### **Paul's Thanksgiving & Prayer ~**

Your goal this week is to gain God's perspective right where you are. Take a moment now & ask Him to help you see what He sees as He actively works to bring about His perfect will for you.

1. Paul is the author of this letter but whose name does he add in vs1 to the salutation? Why do you think he did so? See Philippians 2:20 & 22.
2. What blessing does Paul wish for the people reading his letter? (vs 2)
3. For what is Paul particularly thankful & joyful? (vs 3–5)
4. Why is he confident about the believers in Philippi? (vs 6–7)
5. Having expressed his love, Paul begins to pray about the believer's love in vs 8–9. What does he say about his feelings for them; their feelings for one another?
  - a. What is his hope for them as they await the Lord's return? (vs 10–11)
  - b. "Fruits of righteousness" are the character qualities that bring glory to God. Review these once again in Galatians 5:22–23, making note of which one(s) God is presently working into your own life.

### **Bringing Good Out of Bad Times~** **Reread Philippians 1:12–18**

1. Paul was in prison for preaching the gospel; but what was the result? (vs 13–14)

2. What were the two kinds of people seizing the opportunity to preach about Christ? (vs 15–17)
  - a. Contrast the motive of those selfishly preaching with those preaching out of love. (vs 16–17).
  - b. What did Paul realize about his own calling that made him rejoice? (vs 17b–18)
  - c. Personal: What have you realized through your study about your calling?

## **To Live Is Christ ~ Reread Philippians 1:19–30**

1. How did Paul know his chains were not permanent? (vs 19)
  - a. Whether released from prison or left on earth, what was Paul's greatest desire?
  - b. What perspective ruled Paul's heart-attitude?
2. Paul longed to depart & be with Christ; but if he remained, of what would he be certain? (vs 22–23)
  - a. What did he believe would be the outcome? (vs 25–26)
3. In what practical ways would these Christians prove their commitment? (vs 27– 28)
  - a. As they remained unified, what effect would they be able to have on the world?
4. What important privilege did Paul think it important to remind those who follow Christ? (vs 29–30)

## **Conduct Befitting the Call ~**

1. Explain how the Holy Spirit uniting us would also enable us to triumph together?
2. Striving side by side with one mind for the faith—what do you glean in the following?
  - a. Unity of faith (Ephesians 4:4–6)\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Unity of mind (Philippians 2:2–4)\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Unity of heart (Acts 4:32–33)\_\_\_\_\_
3. The opponents in Paul's day were not so different from what we face today.
  - a. According to John 15:18–21, what did Jesus promise every believer?
  - b. Why do you think He left these particular words for His followers?

## **In Touch with Jesus ~**

1. **LISTEN:** In what way did the Lord Jesus meet you in His Word this week? Be specific.
2. **LEARN:** How can you apply this understanding to your daily Christian walk?
3. **LIVE:** What step of obedience will you purpose to take in your walk of faith?