

To Die is Gain

THE PATH TO JOY, A STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS OVERVIEW

Paul's deep love for the church at Philippi is apparent from the beginning. With each stroke of his pen, he communicates gratitude for their companionship, thankfulness for their many gifts, praise and commendation. They brought him joy despite his chains.

In 2 Corinthians 8:1-5, we learn that during *"a great trial of affliction... and deep poverty"* the Philippians, among the Macedonian churches, *"gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability"* (NIV), so that the Lord's people could be served. *"The poor among the saints at Jerusalem"* (Romans 15:26) were among the beneficiaries, as was Paul. In 1 Corinthians 11:9, we are told that the Philippians supplied Paul's lack. Twice, he received gifts in Thessalonica (Philippians 4:16), once in Corinth, and now, 10 years later and 800 miles away, he received their gift in Rome.

Their desire to give themselves fully to the Lord (2 Corinthians 8:5), loving Him with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and then, to love others as themselves (Luke 10:27), delighted Paul's heart. They had heeded his words and followed in his footsteps. They were laying down their lives for the benefit of others, manifesting Christ in their flesh.

Paul had great confidence in who the Philippians were and who they were becoming. Throughout his letter, he urges them to *keep* emulating Christ and to press on with fervency—for Christ was their goal and prize. As they pursued Jesus, Paul assured them that Christ would supply their strength (4:13) and their need (4:19), just as He had done for him.

MAJOR THEMES

Live for others, not self.

Share Christ's mindset.

Live as Christ lived.

Follow these examples: Timothy, Epaphroditus and Paul.

Focus on the future.

Possess peace.

KEY VERSES/ PASSAGES

- 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.
- 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.
- 2:5-8 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. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
- 2:13 For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.
- 3:7-8 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.
- 3:12-14 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
- 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.
- 4:11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.
- 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
- 4:19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.