

TO LIVE IS CHRIST**Praying with Confidence and Joy****Philippians 1:1–11**

I always pray with joy...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:4b, 6

Day 1: Read Philippians 1:1–2.

1. In other letters Paul introduces himself as an *apostle* of Christ Jesus, but here he calls himself and Timothy *servants* of Christ Jesus. The word he uses for servants was often used in his time for “slaves.” What characteristic(s) of a slave is Paul emphasizing here? (Look ahead to Phil. 2:3–4.)
2. Describe each of the groups to whom this letter is addressed.
 - a. Saints (Rom. 1:5–7; 1 Cor. 6:9–11)
 - b. Overseers (1 Pet. 5:1–3)
 - c. Deacons (Acts 6:1–4)
3. Explain “grace” and “peace” in your own words. (2 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 5:1–2)

Day 2: Read Philippians 1:3–6.

4. In verses 3–5 about what does Paul write with joy?
5. Read Acts 16:11–15, 40 and Philippians 4:15–18. What evidences of partnership are there between Paul and the Philippian Christians?
6. Even deeper than mere partnership, what is at the center of Paul’s relationship with the Philippians? What holds this diverse group together?
7. What ties us together as Christians—social activities or something else? How have you yourself experienced this bond recently?

Day 3: Read Philippians 1:3–8.

8. What gives Paul confidence that his partnership with the Philippian Christians will continue? (vss. 3–7; see also 3 Jn. 4)
9. What is the evidence of a real and living faith? (vs. 6; see also, Mk. 4:13–20; Jn. 8:31; Heb. 3:14)

10. How do Paul's circumstances affect his joy? (4:11–13) What or who is the origin of Paul's joy?
11. What gives you deep joy? How do your circumstances affect your joy?
12. How does your relationship with God affect the way you respond to the circumstances of your life? (Peek ahead to Phil. 4:4–7 to see Paul's own thoughts on this subject.)

Day 4: Read Philippians 1:3–11.

13. We've already seen that Paul prays for the Philippians with thanks (vs. 3) and joy (vs. 4), but what does he pray for them...
 - a. About love? (vs. 9)
 - b. About the future? (vs. 10) (What is needed to discern what is best? Why?)

14. What is the result of "love" without knowledge or depth of insight?

15. What is the result of knowledge without love? (1 Cor. 8:1; 13:1–2)

Day 5: Read Philippians 1:3–11.

16. In verse 11 Paul refers to the "fruit of righteousness." What is the origin of this fruit? (see Rom. 8:5–11; Gal. 5:22–23)
17. Take a look at yourself: what fruit of righteousness is evident? How can you tell whether what you see is really the fruit of God's Holy Spirit or just an ornament that you've decorated yourself with to look like a better Christian? (Jn. 15:1–5)
18. Look again at verses 3–11. What is at the heart of Paul's prayer for the Philippians? What is his deepest desire for them? Their happiness? Their success? Their health? Something else?
19. What do you think was the effect of Paul's words on the Philippians? Read the passage again and imagine that Paul is writing to you personally. What particular things are an encouragement to you?
20. Think for a moment about your own prayers: Are they about God's work or are they mostly about your own personal concerns? It is fine to pray about personal concerns, but is that all you pray about? Stop right now and pray Paul's prayer in verses 9–11 for your own Christian brothers and sisters.