



EPISODE 6: PHILIPPIANS FEBRUARY 21/22

²² *All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.*¹

BOOK	AUTHOR	DATE	RECIPIENTS	PLACE OF WRITING
PHILIPPIANS	PAUL	62	CHURCH IN PHILIPPI	ROME

- I. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE? (FROM THE ESV STUDY BIBLE)**
- a. The church at Philippi had a special significance for Paul, since it was the first church he founded in Europe (see Acts 16:6–40).
 - b. Paul wrote to the Philippians from prison (see above), prompted in part by his reception of their latest gift, sent with Epaphroditus (himself a member of the Philippian congregation).
 - c. Paul himself also wanted to encourage the Philippians in their faith, and his imprisonment meant he could do that only through a letter. He is above all concerned that the Philippians continue to make progress in their faith (1:25). While there were no doubt conflicts within the congregation (notably that of Euodia and Syntyche, 4:2), the Philippians appear to be a healthy congregation, in contrast to the troubled groups in Corinth and Galatia. Can they then relax and rest? Paul's answer is an emphatic no. They must follow Paul's example and "press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (3:14).
 - d. Paul explains what spiritual progress will look like. Christian maturity does not come through special mystical insights available to only a few, but rather through the patient practice of the familiar virtues of love and service to others.

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Php 4:22). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

- e. Those who follow Christ’s example have the hope that God will also vindicate them on the day of Christ, and thus they can rejoice (1:18; 3:1; 4:4). They can also be confident that God will not leave them alone to make their way through the world as best they can. Spiritual progress involves effort: they are encouraged to “work out [their] own salvation with fear and trembling” (2:12). But they can do so knowing that “it is God who works in [them], both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (2:13)²

II. WHAT IS POWERFUL (DOCTRINE)?

*Key Themes*³

1. Christians need to keep making progress in their lives.	1:12, 25; 3:12–16
2. A proper spiritual outlook is critical for progress in the faith.	1:5–11; 2:1–11; 3:7, 15; 4:7–9
3. Christ is the supreme example of loving and faithful service to God, and mature Christians can also serve as role models in this regard.	1:12–26; 2:5–11, 19–30; 3:3–17; 4:9
4. Suffering will come, but through faith it can be met with joy.	1:12–26; 2:14–15; 4:4, 11–13, 19
5. Prayer is crucial for maintaining a joyful Christian life.	1:3–11; 4:5–7
6. The gospel is not individualistic: Christians are to share in rich fellowship with one another, and to be united together in service to promote the gospel.	1:4, 7, 24–27; 2:1–4, 19–30; 4:2–4, 14
7. The old covenant and observance of the law cannot provide the necessary right standing with God. Believers can be saved only through faith in Jesus Christ.	3:2–10
8. Jesus is fully God and fully man. Because of his suffering on the cross, he is now exalted as Lord and Christ.	2:5–11

² Crossway Bibles. (2008). *The ESV Study Bible* (pp. 2275–2276). Crossway Bibles.

³ Crossway Bibles. (2008). *The ESV Study Bible* (p. 2277). Crossway Bibles.

III. WHAT IS PROBLEMATIC (CONTROVERSIAL)?

- a. **LIVING AND LEAVING—1:18-24:** *Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.*

IV. WHAT IS POETIC (THE RHETORICIAN-- JUST BEAUTIFUL)?

- a. **THE CHRIST HYMN-- CH. 2:5-11:** *⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
- b. **OUR CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN-- 3:17-21:** *¹⁷Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*
- c. **REJOICE--4:4-7:** *⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

V. WHAT IS PERSONAL?

- a. **PAUL'S HISTORY—3:4-11:** *If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰that I may*

know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

VI. WHAT IS PRACTICAL?

- a. **TIMOTHY AND EPAPHRODITUS—2:19-30**
- b. **CONFLICT--** Euodia and Syntyche to agree in the Lord (4:2)
- c. **PARTNERSHIP** 4:14-20

VII. WHAT IS PRAYERFUL (THE PART HE PRAYS TO GOD)?

- a. **1:3-6**³ *I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*
- b. **1:9-11**⁹ *And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

VIII. PASTORAL SUMMARY

- a. **MANNER OF LIFE-- 1:27-28:**²⁷ *Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents.*
- b. **BE OF THE SAME MIND AS CHRIST-- 2:1-3:** *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*
- c. **SANCTIFICATION--2:12-16:**¹² *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. ¹⁴ Do all things without grumbling or disputing, ¹⁵ that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶ holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.*
- d. **WATCH ME—Imitate Me--4:8-9:**⁸ *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*