



- Find a good commentary and/or study bible
 - But always keep the Word as the standard (Acts 17:11). The Word is the measure of the commentary, not vice versa.
- Read through the entire book/letter (several times if possible) to get the bigger picture and flow of argument.
- Work through passages on your own first before turning to other references.
- Pray! Ask God to grant you wisdom as you look into His Word.

Helpful
Suggestions
to Begin a
Deeper
Bible Study

- Author: The Apostle Paul
- Recipients: The Church at Philippi
 - First church in Europe, in the region of Macedonia in northern Greece
 - Founded by Paul on his second Missionary Journey, AD 51
 - Predominantly Gentile, with many prominent women
 - Very generous in their partnership with Paul through financial support

Background to Philippians



Paul's Second Missionary Journey (Acts 16)

- Time and Place of Writing: Most likely during Paul's imprisonment in Rome, AD 61 or 62
- Occasion (Reason for writing): Paul had several purposes in writing this letter, though no one issue seems to have reached the critical point such as the need to correct errors in Galatians or Corinthians
 - To thank the Philippians for their sacrificial giving in support of his ministry
 - To send Epaphroditus back to encourage them that God spared him (Phil 2:25-30)
 - To warn them about the possibility of influence from the Judaizers (Phil 3:1-3)
 - To gently rebuke them for allowing a spirit of disunity (Phil 4:2-3)
 - To exalt Christ (Phil 2:5-11)

Background to Philippians

- I. Opening 1:1-11
 - A. Salutation 1:1-2
 - B. Thanksgiving 1:3-8
 - C. Prayer 1:9-11
- II. Paul's Missionary Report 1:12-26
 - A. Paul's Circumstances 1:12-17
 - B. Paul's Attitude 1:18-26
- III. A Call to Sanctification 1:27-2:30
 - A. Christian Citizenship 1:27-2:4
 - B. Christian Humility 2:5-11
 - C. Christian Obedience 2:12-18
- IV. Doctrinal Polemics 3:1-4:1
 - A. Judaizers as the Context for Theology 3:1-6
 - B. The Essence of Pauline Theology 3:7-11
 - C. Practical Theology 3:12-4:1
- V. Final Concerns 4:2-23
 - A. Exhortations 4:2-9
 - B. A Word of Thanks 4:10-20
 - C. Closing 4:21-23

Outline of Philippians

Joy

- Chairō (verb) and Chara (noun) occur 14 times in 4 chapters (3.5 times per chapter).
- In rest of Paul's writing, these words appear an average of 0.5 times per chapter.

Think, Reckon, Consider

- Phroneo occurs 10 times in Philippians, only 13 times total in other Pauline letters.
- Synonyms and related words:
 - Hegeomai (consider, regard) – 2:3, 2:6, 3:8
 - Skopeo (notice, consider) – 2:4, 3:17
 - Logizomai (reckon, consider) – 3:13, 4:8
 - Emphasis on knowledge of Christ – 1:9-11, 3:8-10

Holy Living

- Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ... (1:27)
- Have the same attitude as Christ Jesus and stand out among a wicked and perverse generation (2:1-18)
- Live according to the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith (3:2-21)

Look for Themes and Repeated Terms

From "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus"

- Standard opening in letters from this time included the name of the sender, the recipient(s), and "Greetings."
 - Paul is with Timothy, and wants to encourage the Philippians by sending Timothy's greeting as well.
 - Paul refers to himself as a bond-servant (doulos) rather than an apostle – shows his emphasis on humility
- "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons"
- Addressing the believers in Philippi as saints – emphasizes that they have been set apart by God
 - Overseers and deacons – affirms the two church offices
- "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"
- Paul modified the standard greeting to a distinctively Christian one: "Grace to you, and peace" – also echoes the Hebrew shalom; peace
 - Emphasizes the source of our peace and the reason for our being set apart is only from God Himself

Greeting (Phil 1:1-2)