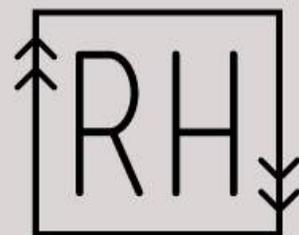




# PHILIPPINANS

MAKE  
MY JOY  
COMPLETE



# How Nice of You to Join Us!

To the depth of our beings, we believe the **Bible is buried treasure**. But unfortunately, not many people consider studying their Bible a worthwhile investment. We hope the reason you are reading this introduction right now is because you want to see for yourself what kind of treasure this Book holds. **Honestly, we are so excited to have you here.**

Part of our goal in this study is to push you to think and wrestle with Scripture on your own. **We aren't going to tell you what to think or believe, but we are going to give you the tools to start digging.**

## How This Works

**Grab a Bible (we will be using the ESV, but for information on different translations see [www.reachingher.com/her-resources](http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources)) and a good journal.** These two things, along with what you are holding in your hand, is everything you need to complete a study on the book of Philippians. As you press on, we will be standing on the sideline cheering for you and ready to offer a hand if you want one.

You'll notice that we have set out a week's worth of study. Feel free to **self-pace the study** to fit your life. Whether that looks like one sitting spent at a coffee shop or seven breakfast table quiet times is up to you. Remember, **a deeper relationship with Christ is the prize**; so don't worry about when, where, or how much you get done. **Start wherever you can, and grow from there.**

While you grow, we can support you in several ways. Links within the study will lead you to a **resource page** that will help explain the tools and concepts used. A **weekly blog** about Philippians will communicate what we are learning, and if you need encouragement, then we have a **social media community** and a **Pep Talk** ([www.reachingher.com/her-resources](http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources)) waiting for you.

You will also see **Reaching Further** portions. Feel free to pursue these if you want a bit more. Finally, when you get to the bottom of each week's lesson you will see a section for **Discipling Her**. This is designed to use when you come together in community and can be an effective tool for leaders, groups, or communal discussions.

Join our online community by tagging **@ReachingHer** in your group pictures and personal posts and adding **#reachingherlovesphilippians**.

**You can take it from here. Know that we love you and will be praying for you.**

# Week 1 // Philippians 1:1-11 // To All the Saints

Welcome to the book of Philippians!

Thank you for joining us. Speaking of thanks, gratitude was the original intent of this letter from Paul to a group of believers in Greece. It was written and received with much enthusiasm. **And it's with the same level of enthusiasm that we want to jump in, grab hold, and look for what makes this letter so compelling.** Let's start at the beginning - the greeting - a perfect place to start.

**Let's grab a mug of something to drink, get cozy, and settle down to read the book of Philippians several times**, really listening to what God has to say. For those of us that will split this week's worth of homework up into daily portions, let's take today to simply pray and read. Perhaps read Philippians in ESV, NIRV, and the Message. For more information about translations of the Bible look here <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.

Next let's prayerfully read through Philippians one more time and **mark references to the author (who wrote the letter) and the audience (who received the letter)**. There are a lot of references, especially to the author, so, let's take time and soak up truth as we go. For some examples and explanations of marking, go to <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.

## Author

- Who is the author of this letter? (Hold onto thoughts about Timothy. We're going to get to him a bit later.)
- Let's read Philippians 1:1-11 and then look through the whole book of Philippians, focusing on where we marked references to the author. **Let's make a short, generalized list from what we learn about Paul.** Directions for list making can be seen here: <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - What do we see about Paul's character? What does Paul say and do? What does his relationship with God and others look like?
- In our journals let's **add to what we learned about Paul from some cross-references:** Acts 9:1-31, 13:1-5, and 28:11-31 - Chapter 28 is where we find Paul as he is writing this letter to the Philippians.
- *Reaching Further: Paul is said to have written about half of the New Testament. Feel free to look up some extra cross-references to have a more thorough understanding of this amazing man.* A "how to" for cross-referencing is found here <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
- Now that we've looked at Scripture, let's do a discreet internet search to learn a bit more about the Apostle Paul and take note of what we learn.
- Before we move on, let's take a moment to evaluate the relationships we have. Is there anyone like Paul in our lives? Are we living out Christ to those around us like Paul? Do any changes need to be made?

## Audience

- Who is the audience of this letter?
- Paul is writing this letter to the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, but does this letter apply to us, saints in the modern day? Let's look at 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Romans 15:4 jotting down the relevance for ourselves.
  - If this scripture does apply to us, then **how should we treat this letter from Paul?**
- Let's read Philippians 1:1-11, 4:1 and then look through the whole book of Philippians one final time, focusing on where we marked references to the audience. Let's **make a short, generalized list from what we learned about the Philippians.**
  - What stands out about the Philippians? Are there any Truths or Applications for us? To learn how to draw Truths and Applications, go to <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
- The book of Philippians is not the first time that Paul and the Philippians meet. **Let's get the backstory by going to Acts 15:36-16:15.**
  - Let's use our summarizing tool for this passage to get a good understanding of the circumstances in which Paul and the Philippians came together. To learn how summarizing works, go here: <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - What insight do you gain about Paul? About the Philippians? About the relationship they share?
  - **How do you see the Lord guide Paul and provide for the Philippians in Acts 16:6-9?** Let's pause and take a moment to talk with the Lord. Let's write down in our journals the times where the Lord has lead us and provided for us. Are there any areas in our lives where we need provision or guidance now?
  - Let's find a map of Paul's Second Missionary Journey and locate some of the places Paul mentions in Acts 16, so we have an idea of where this story takes place. Especially look for Mysia, Macedonia, and Philippi.
  - *Reaching Further: Do some historical background on the city of Philippi and the Roman road that ran through it, the Via Egnatia, in order to have a better understanding of where and how these saints lived.*

## Greetings

- Before we close we will look at the greeting of this letter one more time. Read chapter 1:1-11 and take **note of what we learn about prayer in our journals.** (Pay attention to the word "joy" in verse 4; this is going to keep coming up!)
  - Specifically what do you see Paul praying for the Philippians in verses 9-11?
  - Let's look to Galatians 5:13-25 to help us understand this prayer better.
  - **In our own words what is Paul's prayer for the Philippians?**
  - Are there any Truths or Applications in this for us?

What a beginning! We've looked at the affectionate greeting (and prayer) of the letter from the author (Paul) to his beloved audience (The Philippians and Saints in Christ Jesus). What an encouragement to see the loving relationship between these two! Next week we will move deeper into this letter, gleaning more from the life of our author, the apostle Paul.

## *Discipling Her*

### Suggestions for Leaders and Disciple-Makers

- What do you think about Philippians being a thank you letter?
- What about Paul stood out to you?
- What about the Philippians stood out to you?
- Were there attributes of their relationship that you would like to emulate? What specifically?
- Why do you think Paul prayed for them at this point in the letter?
- How can you apply Paul's prayer to your prayer life?

# Week 2 // Philippians 1:12-26 // I Want You to Know

Last week we were introduced to the church of Philippi **through the eyes of their mentor and apostle, Paul**. This week we are going to understand more about Paul himself as he begins to share some important thoughts with the believers there. As we delve into Paul's perspective, let's see if there is wisdom we can take with us.

Let's start by prayerfully reading through our passage in Philippians - Chapter 1:12-26 and making a list about Paul based on the markings we made last week. **It would be helpful to read the passage in a few different versions of the Bible**. Then, let's go back through our lists and identify specifically what makes Paul different from the world and/or other believers. Information about marking keywords, making lists, and using different Bible Versions can be found at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.

## **I Want You to Know Prison Is Good - Philippians 1:12-14**

- Let's read back over verses 12-14 and consider a few questions. In what circumstance did Paul find himself? Why is he in this circumstance (focus on verse 13)? What good has come from this negative circumstance?
- *Reaching Further: Take some time to do a discretionary internet search of the Praetorian/Palace Guard and details of Paul's imprisonment according to historical record.*
- Let's take a moment to write down in our journals Paul's **perspective** in these verses.
- Last week we learned about Paul's introduction to and work in Philippi. Now, let's go to Acts 16:1-40 to see what happened as Paul's influence grew.
  - Using our summarizing tool in these verses would be a great way to slow down and grasp all the action of this story. Summarizing is explained at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - What happened to Paul and Silas? What were their responses? How were they used by God (let's be specific)?
- **Perspective is important as we view our circumstances, even the ones we cannot control.** Even though Paul was in prison, what did we learn about his **perspective**?
  - What Truths and Applications can we draw from these sections of verses? Why would Paul want the Philippians to know that prison is good?

## **I Want You to Rejoice When Christ Is Proclaimed - Philippians 1:15-18**

- Now, let's focus on verses 15-18 by identifying the two groups Paul is describing. Then for each let's make a list of how Paul characterizes them. How are these two groups similar? How are they different?
- Re-read verse 18. What is Paul's **perspective** of the groups?
- Let's compare this **perspective** to another group Paul addresses in Galatians 1:6-9.
  - Who is this third group? How are they different from the groups in Philippians? How does Paul characterize them?
- What Truths and/or Applications stand out from Paul's **perspective**? Why would Paul want the Philippians to rejoice when Christ is proclaimed?

## I Want You to Know That to Live Is Christ and to Die Is Gain - Philippians 1:19-26

- As we re-read verses 19-26, let's mark two keywords, **Life (also live/remain) and Death (also die/depart)**, and make a list for each.
  - Paul feels torn between what two paths? Let's take a moment and describe Paul's perspective about life and death in our journals.
- Paul makes a choice in verse 25. What is his choice and why does he choose it? What does that say about how he viewed the believers at Philippi?
- Let's do a quick word study of "**Life**" (Strong's # 2198). Information about word studies can be found at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - After we look at the definition, let's make a list of what we learn about true life from these cross-references. **There are several, but there is much wisdom in each; persevere!** Matthew 4:4; John 6:51, 11:25-26; Romans 1:17, 8:12-13, **14:8-9**; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 2:19-20; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 4:9
- In our own words, let's describe what it means to "**live is Christ**" and to "**die is gain.**" Do you share Paul's **perspective**?
- What Truths and/or Applications stand out from this passage? Why would Paul want the Philippians to know that to live is Christ and to die is gain?

**As we have studied, we have seen Paul model for us three perspectives that differ from what we see in the world.** He shows that negative circumstances can be used to promote the Gospel, changing others' lives forever. He shows that it is possible to rejoice in rivalry if Christ is proclaimed. He shows that whether in life or in death, we can be used, and we can find fulfillment. Let's end our week by prayerfully evaluating our own **perspectives**, asking the Spirit to aid in application.

## Discipling Her

### Suggestions for Leaders and Disciple-Makers

- Why is perspective important?
- What stood out to you about Paul's perspective?
- How can negative circumstances be good in your life?
- How does Paul deal with division among believers? What does that mean for you?
- How can you practically live out "to live is Christ and to die is gain"?

# Week 3 // Philippians 1:27-2:30 //

## Conduct Yourself in a Manner Worthy of the Gospel

As we open our Bibles and our journals this week, we will study the largest chunk of scripture in this study. Don't fear! It was rich last week as we learned to imitate Paul's perspective in life, and it will be rich again this week as Paul encourages the Philippians, and us, to choose actions that bring forth a life of worth.

### Let's start by prayerfully reading Philippians 1:27- 2:30.

- Now, **dwell on the very first phrase** (1:27a).
  - What is it that Paul is asking the Philippians to do?
  - What is the Gospel of Christ? **Let's do some cross-referencing** to help ourselves understand what the Gospel is. Start at 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 or Romans 1:15-16 and then find additional cross-references from there. For assistance with cross-referencing, we can look at this: <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - In our own words let's rephrase what Paul is asking us to do.

### How to Conduct Yourself in a Manner Worthy of the Gospel

- Paul didn't tell the Philippians to do something without telling them how to do it. So, let's reread Philippians 1:27- 2:18 and **make a list of every direction Paul gives**. List making tips are here at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
- **Let's go back through our list and briefly evaluate it**. Does this list seem easy or difficult to accomplish? In what ways?
- After praying through this list we may find it a bit overwhelming, and perhaps we feel like we fall short. That's ok because we have more to learn. **Let's look to our first example** and see the key to being able to accomplish these directives.
  - Again read 2:5-11. Who is this passage about? Who is our example and role model that we are to follow?
  - **Let's go back and make a list of everything we learn about Jesus**. How do you see Jesus fulfilling the idea to "conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the Gospel?"
  - Specifically, let's look at verse 5. What are we to emulate that Jesus had?
  - What kind of attitude did Jesus have? (Review verses 3 and 8.)
  - **Let's do a word study on "humbled,"** (Strong's # 5013) to see what we can learn about this key attitude of humility. Don't forget to do the cross-reference portion of this word study; it is a treasure trove waiting to be unearthed. Word studies are exemplified and explained here: <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
- How will having the attitude of Christ help us to live worthy of the Gospel?
- Let's evaluate the list of directives in Philippians 1:27-2:18 one more time, searching our hearts to see if we are humble. How will humility help us live out any of the commands that seem difficult?

- Before we move onto the next portion, **let's look at one more aspect of humility.** Re-read Philippians 2: 9-11. What did God do for Jesus? In our cross-references about humility, did we learn anything about God also exalting us if we are humble? We can review Matthew 23:12 and 1 Peter 5:5-6.
- Are there any Truths and Applications that stand out? Truth and Applications are explained at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.

### **Why You Conduct Yourself Worthy of the Gospel**

- Let's read through Philippians 1:27-2:18 again, **this time noting and listing the reasons why Paul asks us to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel.** In order to do this we will make two headings in our journals:
  - One in regards to his relationship with the Philippians.
  - Another in regards to the Philippians being a witness to the world.
- **What do we learn about each of the reasons why Paul is instructing them to live worthy of the Gospel of Christ?** Does this give us any insight into being witnesses? Into us having joy and relationship with one another?

### **Two Examples of a Life Conducted Worthy of the Gospel**

- Let's learn from two other examples what a life worthy of the Gospel looks like. **Read Philippians 2:19-30 again and segment the passage into two chunks based on the two examples Paul is going to give us?**
- We'll look at Timothy first. (See we got back around to him!) Make a list of everything we see about Timothy. Don't forget to go back and look at chapter 1 verse 1. What do we learn about him?
- Let's look at some cross-references to see what else we can find out about Timothy. Start by reviewing Acts 16:1-15. Then let's head to 2 Tim 1:1-6, and go from there looking up cross-references on our own. **How do you see Timothy live in a manner worthy of the Gospel?** Are there any Truths or Applications from Timothy's life that we can apply to our own?
- **Next let's look at Epaphroditus: making a list of everything we learn about him.** How do we see Epaphroditus live in a manner worthy of the Gospel? Are there any Truths or Application from Epaphroditus's life that we can apply to our own?

Paul takes the time to urge the Philippians to live in a way that will result in a worthy life. This type of life will evidence itself as it produces joy in Paul's life, in their own lives, and also as it brings God glory by the Philippians showing themselves to be "blameless and innocent children of God." Let's close by coming before the Father and asking Him to help us live in this fruitful manner, so that we too can fellowship in joy and bring God glory by our actions and witness.

# Discipling Her

## Suggestions for Leaders and Disciple-Makers

- What do you think it means to live a life worthy of the Gospel?
- What about Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus exemplified a worthy life?
- What instructions were most applicable to you?
- How does humility aid in living a life of worth?
- What do you think about Jesus' example of humility?

# Week 4 // Philippians 3 // Press on Toward the Goal

“What is the meaning of life?” is one of those continually contemplated questions that has had mankind guessing for centuries. And honestly, sometimes even believers can skip over such a “deep” question believing it has no concrete answer. **Well, Paul has an answer for us in Philippians!** Last week Paul urged us through Philippians chapter 2 to live our lives worthy of the Gospel. His plea to live like Christ is now going to be fleshed out into the why - **why we live like Christ and how it can be the goal of life.**

Let's begin this week by prayerfully reading through chapter 3 a few times - maybe using some different Bible translations. While we read, let's summarize the whole chapter. And although rich, there are only 21 verses, so it shouldn't take us long. Simple refreshers on Bible translations and summarizing can be found at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.

## Two Commands - Philippians 3:1-3

- As we read over these intro verses, let's recognize the two commands Paul gives to the church at Philippi. What are they and why is Paul giving these imperatives to the believers?
- Let's do some background to help us understand the “why” by reading through Acts 15:1-12.
  - There is a conflict in the early church - what is it? How did Peter, Paul and Barnabas clarify the Gospel to the early church?
  - Why would Paul want the Philippians to beware the false circumcision?
- Now let's focus on verse 3 where Paul says we are the true circumcision. How does he describe the true circumcision? How do we live?
  - **What do you think it means to put “no confidence in the flesh”?** (Consider what we learned about circumcision in Acts 15.) We'll come back to this idea later in our study.

## Paul's Flesh - Philippians 3:4-6

- In week 1 we marked all references to Paul. Now, let's go through our markings in verses 4-6 and make a list of why Paul could have confidence in the flesh.
  - **This is kind of like Paul's resume, so let's sum up these accolades into our own words.** What kind of man was Paul before He came to know Christ? What would be a part of your resume/confidence in the flesh?
  - *Reaching Further: Take some time to do a few discretionary internet searches on the different parts of Paul's resume.*
  - What exactly is Paul trying to communicate to his readers in verse 4? Is his claim accurate?

### Gain and Loss - Philippians 3:7-11

- This section begins with an important word - "BUT". **When we see this word in scripture, we need to pay attention, so we can identify the contrast.** Let's figure out what this "BUT" is about together.
- As we read over verses 7-11, let's mark a few keywords: **count (also consider), loss, gain, and know** - making a list for each.
  - What is Paul losing/has lost? Why?
  - What is Paul gaining/has gained? What has surpassing value to Paul?
- Paul uses a very active phrase in verse 8. What is it? Let's do a word study of "count/consider" (Strong's 2233). Information about word studies can be found at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - What does it say about Paul that he is actively counting all things as loss? How many things?
  - How is this perspective like the perspective of Jesus we saw in Philippians 2:5-11?
- **Twice Paul counters loss with the gain of knowing Christ.** What does it mean to **know** Him according to these verses?
  - Let's do an additional word study of "know" (Strong's #1097). What do we learn?
  - Finally, in verses 10-11 what is Paul's ultimate goal?
- Now, let's see if we can identify the contrast Paul is making with this "BUT". Start in verse 4 and read back through once again through verse 11.
  - What is Paul's comparison? What is he communicating about having confidence in the flesh versus having confidence in Christ?
- There are a lot of rich Truths and Applications here for us. What is the Spirit communicating to you? **Do you consider all things loss for the sake of knowing Christ?**

### A New Attitude - Philippians 3:12-16

- Let's read through verses 12-14 and identify the two contrasting statements Paul makes. Hint - both include "BUT" again!
  - What does Paul not yet have?
  - What does Paul choose to do instead?
- Once again, **Paul uses very active language to explain his pursuits.** What do you think it means to "press on"? What is he pressing on to receive?
- Let's look a little closer at verse 14 by seeking out wisdom from some cross-references: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27; 1 Peter 5:10; 2 Timothy 1:8-12; Romans 8:28, 11:29. Cross-references are explained at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - Let's write out what we learn from each in our journals about "the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
- Now let's read back over verses 15-16. What attitude is Paul prescribing to his readers considering what we have already studied?
- Once again, in a few short verses, Paul blasts us with Truths and Applications for our lives. Let's pause and write down what we want to carry with us through the rest of our study.

### Paul's Urging - Philippians 3:17-21

- Paul wraps up chapter 3 with two commands in verse 17. What are they?
  - Following the patterns/examples of others is important. Let's take a second and make a list of those whose patterns/examples we follow.
- Now, Paul contrasts two groups in verses 17-21. Let's identify and mark the two groups making a list for each.
  - What do you learn about the two groups?
  - There is one group who is labeled "enemies". How does this group connect to what we studied at the beginning of this chapter? (see verse 2) Also, according to verse 18, how does Paul feel about these enemies?
  - How are we different according to Paul's description?
- Once again, what Truths and/or Applications stand out from this passage? Let's take some time to evaluate what we've learned, including our list of those whose patterns/examples we follow.

**Living a life worthy of the Gospel has to have the goal in Christ Himself.** The pursuit of knowing Jesus is what gives fuel to live out the Gospel each and every day. Let's close this week by looking over all the Truth and Applications that we wrote down and prayerfully ask the Lord to begin to work them into us.

## Discipling Her

### Suggestions for Leaders and Disciple-Makers

- What does Paul say is the meaning of life?
- What do you think it means to put no confidence in the flesh?
- How do you consider all things as loss?
- Have you known the joy of Christ as gain in your life?
- How do you "press on"?
- Whom are you patterning your life after?

# Week 5 // Philippians 4:1-23 // Stand Firm

In this short letter from the apostle Paul to the beloved church in Philippi, Paul has communicated several important points: "I want you to know," "Conduct yourself worthy of the Gospel," and "Press on Toward the Goal." Finally, we come to the last point Paul communicates to the Philippians. He urges them to "Stand Firm!" So, as we begin chapter 4, let's say the same thing to ourselves:

*Let us not grow weary in our study but stand firm and meet the Lord here.*

**Prayfully read Philippians 4:1-23 a couple of times**, perhaps in several versions. (The Message is a great supplementary version to pick up the flow of this chapter's thought.) For information about Bible versions, go to <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.

- According to verse 1 what are we reminded of regarding Paul and the Philippians' relationship? How does understanding Paul and the Philippians' relationship give us insight into why Paul would urge them to stand firm?

## **Standing Firm in Conflict**

- Let's reread 4: 2-3 and **write out in our own words what is happening within the church at Philippi**. How does Paul desire for the believers to live?
- Do we ever see or experience conflict within our local body of believers? Let's take a moment and jot down if we are personally experiencing any conflicts. We're going to learn "how to agree" (also translated "live in harmony" or "be of the same mind") with our fellow believers.
- What does Paul urge us to do to resolve conflict? Do we have a choice to make?
- Let's look up some cross-references to get a better grip on how to handle the day-to-day conflicts that living in the world brings us. **We'll make a list of what we learn in our journals**. Information about cross-referencing can be reviewed at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - Philippians 2:1-8; Matthew 18:15-17, 21-22; Romans 12:17-19; Ephesians 4:25-32; Hebrews 12:14-15
- Are there any Truths and/or Applications God has revealed to us? Let's stand firm in conflict by asking God to show us how to use the tools He has given us, so that we may live in harmony with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

## **Stand Firm by Rejoicing and Forbearing (Being Patient)**

- Let's reread 4:4-5 and write in our own words what these verses mean.
- Hang onto the idea of rejoicing because **we're going to come back and address this topic next week. It's going to be good!**
- Let's look at James 5:7-11 to help us discern more of what Paul is meaning in verse 5.
  - How does it help us to be patient by remembering the truth of God's character (James 5:11)? By remembering that God is near and is coming back?
  - How is being patient important to standing firm?

### Stand Firm in the Face of Anxiety

- Before we start this section, **let's grab our journals and really examine our hearts.** Do we worry? Are we anxious? If so, what about? What are the general things that disrupt our peace? The specific things that are disrupting it right here and now?
- With this in mind let's reread 4:6-7 and note in our journals what Paul is instructing us.
- **Now let's add to this some cross-references: Start with Philippians 4:19 and Matthew 6:25-34** and then gather a handful more.
- God, through Paul, has given us directives for dealing with anxiety. Sum up what we have learned so that when anxiety comes again, we can read our own words and be encouraged by them. Are there any Truths and Applications for us that we can list?

### Standing Firm in Our Thought Life

- As we **look at Philippians 4:8-9, let's list out what things we are "to dwell on" according to verse 8.** What are we to do according to verse 9?
- **Let's do a word study on "think"** in verse 8 (Strongs # 3049). Directions for how to do a word study can be found here: <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>. What does it mean that we are to "think" on these things? What does that look like in our daily lives?
- Let's see what else God has to say about our thought life and why it is important. Look at Romans 8:6, 12:1-2, Colossians 3:1-2, and Isaiah 26:3. What do we learn? How has Philippians equipped us to fulfill what God has called us to regarding our minds?
- **Let's evaluate our list from Philippians 4:8-9 by taking each item and applying it specifically to ourselves** - This can be done in either in positive or negative statements; sometimes the easiest way to define something is to say what it is not.) Take some time to be prayerful here if you feel God tugging at your heart.

### Standing Firm by Trusting in God's Provision

- Read 4:10-23 one more time. We've already marked the apostle Paul, so let's use those markings and make a list about what we see him say and do. Let's also mark the Philippians and make a list about what we see them say and do.
  - Are there any fresh Truths or Applications that we can take away from Paul? From the Philippians?
- Let's do some background to better understand these verses. We can find supporting accounts in 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 and 11:7-9. Do we gain any new insight?
- In our own words, let's sum up the exchange between Paul and the Philippians. **How do we see God provide for Paul and for the Philippians?** How do we see Paul and the Philippians as examples of people who are standing firm in the Lord?

- What is Paul's secret that enables him to be content regardless of circumstances? (We can review verse 4:13 and also look at 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.)
  - **Let's pause and take a moment to evaluate our own lives: Are we content? Do we trust God to provide for us?** How does this trust or lack of trust play out in our lives?
- *Reaching Further: Let's grab a note card and jot down Philippians 4:13 and memorize it.*

What a strong way to finish! Paul was so very proud of the saints in Philippi. They **started** well "from the first day," (Philippians 1:5). We have watched as Paul urged the Philippians to **finish** in the same manner. He has encouraged and equipped them, while at the same time encouraging and equipping us. **May we heed the Apostle Paul and STAND FIRM being willing to "fight the good fight and finish the race," (2 Timothy 4:7).**

## Discipling Her

### Suggestions for Leaders and Disciple-Makers

- How can you stand firm in conflict?
- How can you rejoice while waiting with patience?
- How can you stand firm when anxiety comes?
- What should we "dwell on" and why are these things important?
- Have you seen God provide for you? Have you provided for others?
- Are you content? Is contentment important?

# Week 6 // Make My Joy Complete

Complete Joy is something we all desire. Each week as we have studied, Paul has revealed more and more about how the believer, upon acceptance of Christ, learns to live the Gospel out for all to see. **What happens as a result is what we desire - Joy that is complete.** This week is about seeing the big picture - a theme of joy and rejoicing that we can take with us wherever we go.

So, Paul's Aim for this letter, his Theme, is as follows: **when we live out the Gospel, our Joy is complete.**

Before we wrap up Philippians and begin our week's study, **let's take some time to be a bit introspective.** Let's look for a quiet spot, grab our journals, and prayerfully consider the following questions:

- How would you define Joy? Rejoicing?
- What gives you Joy? What makes you want to Rejoice?
- When and How do you Rejoice?
- Is your Joy continual? Is your Joy conditional?
- Is Joy different from Happiness?

Now, we're ready to jump back into Philippians. Let's read through the entire book once again, this time marking two keywords - **"Joy" and "Rejoice"**. These two words are repeated quite a bit and make up the basis of the Aim/Theme for Philippians. Once we've marked, let's make a list about what we learn from each reference. Finding keywords, marking, and making lists are further explained at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.

- What gave Paul Joy? What caused him to Rejoice?
- Let's remember Paul's circumstances at the time of penning this letter. What does this say about Paul's perspective here?
- Why do you think Paul would put so much focus on Joy and Rejoicing in this letter to the church at Philippi?

The recurring idea of Joy is not isolated to just Philippians. References to Joy and Rejoicing are mentioned over 300 times in the Bible! **Repetition is one of God's ways of showing importance in His Word**, so let's take even a deeper look at these two concepts.

- Let's start by doing a word study of the original definitions of these two words. The Strong's reference for Joy is #5479, and the Strong's reference for Rejoice is #5463. These two words are related, so their definitions will be similar. That's ok! There is resource information on word studies at <http://www.reachingher.com/her-resources/>.
  - What do we learn from the original Greek definitions? How do they compare to modern definitions? Our own definitions?

- Now, let's go out into the rest of the Word by looking at some cross-references. Don't worry! We aren't going to look at all 300+, but there are several. So, let's see the wealth of knowledge we can grasp by recording what we learn in our journals.
  - Luke 15:3-10; John 15:9-11, 16:20-24; Romans 12:12-15, 15:13; 1 Corinthians 13:4-6; 2 Corinthians 7:4; Galatians 5:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; 2 Timothy 1:2-4; Hebrews 12:1-2; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:8-9, 4:13; 1 John 1:3-4; Revelation 19:6-8
- What stands out about Joy and/or Rejoicing? Where does Joy come from? Why do you think it is such a theme throughout, not only Philippians, but also the whole Bible?

**Let's connect Joy and Rejoicing back to everything we've learned so far.** Let's briefly flip back through all our notes and highlight what stood out to us from the book of Philippians, including major Truths and Applications.

- Now we're ready to grasp some final wisdom from our study.
  - Week 1 - How is Joy made complete within our relationships?
  - Week 2 - How is Joy made complete through our perspectives?
  - Week 3 - How is Joy made complete as we live a worthy life?
  - Week 4 - How is Joy made complete when we press on toward the goal?
  - Week 5 - How is Joy made complete when we stand firm?

Like Paul, the lives we lead can get complicated. Being a Christian doesn't mean we are immune to negative circumstances, trials, or hard times. But, what we've learned in Philippians is that in the midst of those things, in the midst of life, complete Joy is still within our grasp. Through the words of Paul **God has given us instruction, coaching, and examples to follow that all point to our theme - when we live out the Gospel, our Joy is complete.** How good is our God? He saves us, and He also knows how to give us our heart's desire. So whatever will come our way - good days, bad days, times of blessing, times of trial - **our Joy can be complete in Him.**

## Discipling Her

### Suggestions for Leaders and Disciple-Makers

- What is your definition of "Joy/Rejoicing/Happiness"?
- Have your definitions changed?
- What did you learn about Joy/Rejoicing in Philippians? In the rest of the Bible?
- What stood out to you from your notes from previous weeks?
- How is Joy made complete in your relationships?
- How is Joy made complete through your perspectives?
- How is Joy made complete through a worthy life?
- How is Joy made complete when you press on toward the goal?
- How is Joy made complete when you stand firm?

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