



Paul's Epistle to the Philippians

Paul's Epistle to the Philippians: Introduction

- **Constable's Historical Background of Philippi:**
 - The name of the city of Philippi was originally Krinides (lit. springs).
 - It stood about 10 miles inland from the Aegean Sea in the Roman province of Macedonia.
 - In 356 B.C. Philip II, King of Macedonia and father of Alexander the Great, renamed the town after himself and enlarged it.
 - In 42 B.C. the Romans Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus defeated Brutus and Cassius in a battle fought just west of Philippi.
 - After that battle Philippi became a military Roman colony.
 - Subsequent battles in 42 and 31 B.C. resulted in Philippi receiving even higher status, and the citizens enjoyed autonomous government, immunity from taxes, and treatment as if they lived in Italy.
 - Luke's description of Philippi as a "leading city of the district of Macedonia" (*Acts 16:12*) probably refers to its colonial status since it was the only Roman colony in the area.
 - The Via Egnatia, the main highway from Rome to the east, ran through Philippi and brought much commerce and many travelers to Philippi.



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History of the Epistle:

- The letter was written to the believers in Philippi in ~60-62 A.D. while Paul was under house arrest in Rome, awaiting trial before emperor Nero.
- After several roadblocks in his travel, Paul went to Troas where he was given the vision of a Macedonian man to come to Europe. On his way Paul went to Philippi. Luke joined Silas and Timothy there.
- The letter must have been written after the 3 other Epistles were sent from Rome, because Luke was likely no longer with him (*Phil 2:20*)
- When Paul arrived in Philippi, he discovered that the man of Macedonia was the woman Lydia, holding a prayer meeting by the riverside (*Acts 16:13-16*).

1st Missionary Journey (45 - 47 A.D.)		
No books were written		
2nd Missionary Journey (51 - 54 A.D.)		
1.	1 Thessalonians (52 - 53 A.D.)	Written from Corinth
2.	2 Thessalonians (52 - 53 A.D.)	Written from Corinth
3rd Missionary Journey (54 - 58 A.D.)		
3.	1 Corinthians (Spring, 57 A.D.)	Written from Ephesus
4.	2 Corinthians (Autumn, 57 A.D.)	Written from Macedonia
5.	Galatians (Winter, 57 A.D.)	Written from Greece
6.	Romans (Spring 58, A.D.)	Written from Corinth
First Roman Imprisonment (61 - 63 A.D.)		
7.	Philemon (61 or 62 A.D.)	Written from Rome
8.	Colossians (61 or 62 A.D.)	Written from Rome
9.	Ephesians (61 or 62 A.D.)	Written from Rome
10.	Philippians (61 or 62 A.D.)	Written from Rome
Between First & Second Imprisonments (63 - 67 A.D.)		
11.	1 Timothy (67 A.D.)	Written from Macedonia
12.	Titus (67 A.D.)	Written from Ephesus
Second Roman Imprisonment (68 A.D.)		
13.	2 Timothy (68 A.D.)	Written from Rome

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- The church was founded in ~53 A.D, during his 2nd missionary journey when Paul and Silas were with him.



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Pauls' 2nd Missionary Journey





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Ruins of Ancient Philippi





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- The church was founded in ~53 A.D, during his 2nd missionary journey when Paul and Silas were with him.
- In part, after casting a demon out of a girl who was demon-possessed and making money for her owners, Paul was imprisoned.
- Paul visited Philippi at least one other time and the church in Philippi kept in close touch with the apostle.
 - *Phil 4:15 – Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.*
- Paul did mention his visit to Philippi in this return as he traveled from Greece through Macedonia during his third missionary journey.
 - *Acts 20:16 - And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.*
- Epaphroditus played a major role in Paul's life. When the church heard that Paul was in prison in Rome, they immediately dispatched Epaphroditus, their pastor, to Rome with words of sympathy, a gift, and many expressions of love. Epaphroditus then was the person to transport Paul's letter to Philippi.
- **Evidence:**
 - The mention of Epaphroditus' journey between Rome and Philippi.



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• Evidence (cont'd):

- The style and manner of thought are c/w that of Paul.
- The reason for Epaphroditus' journey to Rome and back to Philippi.
 - *Phil 2:25 - Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;*
 - *Phil 4:18 - Indeed, I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.*
- Philippian contribution to Paul's support.
 - *Phil 4:10 - But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity..*
- That Timothy had been with Paul at Philippi during Paul's 2nd missionary journey.
 - *Phil 2:19 - But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state.*
- Letter of Polycarp to the Philippians, written about 50 years later wherein he refers to “the blessed and glorious Paul, who wrote letters to you.” That Polycarp knew this epistle seems clear from the distinct references to it in his letter.
- Irenaeus in his work *Against Heresies* (c. 182-188) quotes from every chapter of Philippians and unhesitatingly ascribes it to Paul (III. xii. 9; IV. xxiv. 2).



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• Purpose:

- The church at Philippi was formed in a Roman colony with a relatively more developed cultural level and was less Jewish and more Gentile than all others; moreover, this was the first church established in Europe (*Acts 16:6-40*).
- The importance of women in the church was already in existence. For instance, Paul first attended a prayer meeting of women not in a synagogue. And by record, Lydia was the first convert in Europe. Moreover, other women were prominent in the church.
 - *Phil 4:2,3 - I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life.*
- To exemplify the generosity to support the work of the Lord.
 - *2 Cor 8:1,2 - Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.*
 - *Phil 4:16,17 - How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.*
- The epistle is practical, and its theme is that of joy, christian experience, unity, and thankfulness; soundness of doctrine is assumed.



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- **Scofield Sectional Description:**
 - *Phil 1 1-30 – Introduction (McCalley – Paul's Circumstances)*
 - *1-7 – Salutation and Thanksgiving*
 - *8-30 – Christ the Christian's Life*
 - *8-18 - Rejoicing in spite of suffering*
 - *19-30 - Paul's expectation of deliverance*
 - *Phil 2:1-30 – Christ the Christian's Pattern: Rejoicing in Lowly Suffering*
 - *1-4 – Exhortation to meekness and unity*
 - *5-8 – The humiliation of Christ*
 - *9-11 The exhalation of Jesus*
 - *12-16 – The outworking of salvation*
 - *17-30 – The apostolic example*
 - *Phil 3:1-21 – Christ, Object of the Christian's Faith, Desire and Expectation*
 - *1-3 – Warning against legalizers*
 - *4-6 – Warning against legal righteousness*
 - *7-9 – Christ, object for the believer's faith for righteousness*
 - *10-14 – Christ, object for the believer's desire for fellowship in resurrection power*
 - *15-16 – Appeal for runty among believers*



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- **Scofield Sectional Description:**
 - *17-19 – No compromise for the sake of unity*
 - *20-21 – Christ, objects of the believer's expectation*
 - *Phil 4:1-23 - Christ, the Christian's Strength: Rejoining through Anxiety*
 - *1-3 – Exhortation to be of sound mind*
 - *4-9 – The presence of the God of peace*
 - *10-19 – The believer's sufficiency through Christ*
 - *20-23 - Conclusion*
- Sources of scriptural direction for this lesson were based on input from Constable, Jason Fausset and Brown, Scofield, McCalley, Wuest, and several online references for photos.