

Philippians: Session 1 Questions

AIM: To see the relationship between Paul and the Church at Philippi as an example and challenge to our relationship to the church and to each other.

1. Many Christians find Philippians the most attractive of all Paul's letters. Has that been your experience? What things in it stick out in the memory as being important?
2. Four things are said to characterize the first readers of this letter. What are they? In one sense these things embrace all our relationships (in ourselves, to Christ, in our context, to Christian leaders). In what ways does Paul's teaching about these relationships challenge us?
3. These Christians were "in Christ", but "at Philippi". From what you know of Philippi (see Acts 16:11-40) what difficulties and opportunities did that present to them?
4. Paul had a special responsibility for the Philippian church as a founding apostle. But the kind of love for the church which he expresses in verses 3-5 derives from a Christian heart, not from an office in the church. What can we learn from this example? (1 Cor 4:16, 11:1)
5. Discuss the comment: "It is never money wasted when we send people to encourage missionaries as well as provide them with financial support".
6. The Philippians were partners with Paul in his work. What three things do we need to notice about this partnership? Can you add to this? What practical things can you do (as an individual or fellowship) to follow their example?
7. Is it significant that Paul begins with gratitude rather than complaints? Why do some of us instinctively do the reverse whenever we mention other Christians? Does the way in which Paul thinks of the Philippians help here?