



# *Philippians*

**A 17 WEEK INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY**

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*By Lisa Hughes*

## Philippians Chapter 1 (ESV)

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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.

7 It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

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.

12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,

13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.

14 And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will.

16 The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.

17 The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.

18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,

19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance,

20 as 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.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell.

23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.

25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,

26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

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. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.

29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,

30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

## Philippians Chapter 2 (ESV)

1 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.

4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,

7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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.

17 Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

18 Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you.

20 For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.

21 For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

22 But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.

23 I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me,

24 and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

25 I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need,

26 for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill.

27 Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious.

29 So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men,

30 for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

### Philippians Chapter 3 (ESV)

1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—

4 though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more:

5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;

6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 Indeed, 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

9 and 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—

10 that 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.

12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

## Philippians Chapter 4 (ESV)

1 Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.

3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;

6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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.

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.

11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

14 Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.



15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again.

17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.

18 I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

20 To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.

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

23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

## Philippians

### Lesson #12, Chapter 3:8-14

God's Word has such richness to it that we cannot come to study it without His eye-opening and soul-stirring help. Be sure to take time to ask the Lord for His wisdom to gain insight into this passage, so your heart is changed as a result.

1. Paul begins Philippians 3:8 with the phrase, *more than that I* (ESV *indeed, I*; NKJV *yet indeed I also*; NIV *what is more*). What is he comparing between Philippians 3:7 and 3:8?
2. Why is Paul willing to *count all things loss* according to Philippians 3:8?
3. What *kind of things* does Paul count as loss? See 1 Corinthians 3:18-23; 8:1-2; 2 Corinthians 11:18, 22-33; Philippians 3:3-6.
4. How would counting all things *loss* help you know Christ better, in the way Paul is speaking in Philippians 3:8? How do the "things" get in the way of knowing Christ?
5. What information about Jesus in Philippians 3:8 helps us see *why* Paul counted things loss *for the sake of Christ, because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ, and to gain Christ*?
6. Define *Lord* (Strong's #2962). *Lord* is the Greek equivalent of Yahweh, the memorial name of God as seen in Exodus 3:14. See also Exodus 3:13-15; John 20:28; Acts 2:36;

Philippians 2:10-11; 2 Peter 2:1; Jude 4 to understand the meaning behind “Lord” as used in Philippians 3:8.

7. Paul so highly values the Lord Jesus that he counts it a privilege to know Him. What else does Paul desire according to verse 9?
  
8. Why is this characteristic, as seen in verse 9, essential for all who would know Christ? See 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 2:16; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:3-7.
  
9. Just as Paul has done in verse 9, take some time to consider how Jesus’ righteousness is given to all who turn to Him in faith. In what way have these awesome and precious truths impacted how you think and live?
  
10. In this passage, Paul says he desires to *gain Christ* (verse 8) and *be found in Him in His righteousness* (verse 9), yet that’s not all. What else does Paul desire from the Lord Jesus according to verse 10?
  
11. See what you can learn about the word *know* as used here [Strong’s #1097].
  
12. What experiential, relational ways did Paul desire to know the Lord Jesus in Philippians 3:10?

“Paul already knew Christ as his Savior. But he wanted to know Him more intimately as his Lord.”  
~The Bible Knowledge Commentary<sup>1</sup>

“Paul wants to come to know the Lord Jesus in that fulness of experimental knowledge which is only wrought by being like Him. He wants to know also in an experiential way the power of Christ’s resurrection. That is, he wants to experience the same power which raised Christ from the dead surging through his own being, overcoming sin in his life and producing the Christian graces.” ~Kenneth Wuest<sup>2</sup>

“An unknown God can neither be trusted, served, nor worshipped.”  
~A. W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*, from the Preface

13. In verse 10 Paul writes about knowing Christ better through suffering. Look up the following Scriptures, then explain what you learn about the “fellowship of suffering” with Christ. See John 15:18-20; Romans 8:16-17; 2 Corinthians 1:5; Galatians 2:20; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 Peter 4:12-13; 5:9.
  
14. The last item in Philippians 3:10 is a result of entering into Christ’s sufferings. What happens as we fellowship with Christ in our sufferings according to verse 10?
  
15. Look up the following verses to gain a better grasp of what it means to be “conformed to His death.” See Luke 9:23; 2 Corinthians 4:7-12; 5:14-15; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:21; 2:3-8.
  
16. What does Paul mean when he says he desires to “attain to the resurrection from the dead” in Philippians 3:11? See Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 15:16-17, 20-23; Philippians 3:21; 1 Peter 1:3-5.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert P. Lightner, [“Philippians.”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 661.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, [Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader](#), vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 93.

- a. How should that knowledge and understanding about our future resurrection change how we live?
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17. The ESV and NKJV connect verse 11 to Paul's previous comments, so that the transition from verse 10 into verse 11 reads, "...becoming like Him in His death, *that by any means possible* I may attain to the resurrection from the dead." Explain how verse 11 further reveals Paul's intense desire to *know Christ*. See also Romans 8:18, 23.
  
  18. After ardently giving voice to his deepest heart desires, what is Paul quick to concede in verse 12?
    - a. Define *perfect* [Strong's #5048]. See Philippians 3:21.
  
    - b. Define *press on* [Strong's #1377]. See also 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 1 Timothy 6:12; Hebrews 12:1 to gain a picture of what Paul meant.
  
  19. What does Paul mean when he says he desires to *lay hold of that for which he was laid hold of by Christ Jesus*? As you look up the following verses to help you form your answer, consider why God grabs hold of anyone. What is your purpose as a believer? See Ephesians 1:4; Philippians 3:13-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 2:11-14.
  
  20. Because Paul is not yet made perfect, what does he do according to verse 13?

21. Obviously, we will remember things that happened to us in the past, so what does it look like *practically* to “forget what lies behind” and “reach forward to what lies ahead?”
- a. How does the passage we’re studying in this lesson provide a framework for not being encumbered by the past?
22. What lies ahead for all believers according to Philippians 3:14?
23. Sometimes we need to be reminded of the goal, of what we’re really living for, and what we’ve been called to do as believers. How does Philippians 3:12-14 help direct your heart and mind in how you need to live? What are some ways you can live more faithfully with your eye on *the goal*?

“Yes, for His sake I have been caused to forfeit all things, and I count them but dung, in order that I might come to know Him in an experiential way, and to come to know experientially the power of his resurrection, and a joint-participation in His sufferings, being brought to the place where my life will radiate a likeness to His death, if by any means I might arrive at the goal, namely, the out-resurrection out from among those who are dead.” ~Kenneth Wuest’s translation of Philippians 3:10-11<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, [\*Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader\*](#), vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 95.

My Goal Is God Himself  
by Frederic Brook

My goal is God Himself, not joy, nor peace,  
Nor even blessing, but Himself, my God;  
'Tis His to lead me there—not mine, but His—  
At any cost, dear Lord, by any road.

So faith bounds forward to its goal in God,  
And love can trust her Lord to lead her there;  
Upheld by Him, my soul is following hard  
Till God hath full fulfilled my deepest prayer.

No matter if the way be sometimes dark,  
No matter though the cost be oft-times great,  
He knoweth how I best shall reach the mark,  
The way that leads to Him must needs be strait.

One thing I know, I cannot say Him nay;  
One thing I do, I press towards my Lord;  
My God my glory here, from day to day,  
And in the glory, there my great Reward.

## Philippians

### Lesson #13, Chapter 3:15-21

God's Word has treasures upon its surface, but often precious gems must be dug out and examined so they can be enjoyed. Philippians chapter 3 contains many such sections and this lesson is no different. As you prepare to study this book, take time to ask the Lord for His help and a willingness to gain His mind in your studying.

1. Our passage is fairly straightforward, but there are a few sections we need to consider carefully to gain the full impact of Paul's teaching. Let's do a bit of review to get us in place and ready. First, in Philippians 3:8-11, what does Paul desire above all things?
2. Next, in Philippians 3:12 what does Paul mean when he says, "Not that I have already obtained *it*?" See Philippians 3:10-11 and verse 21 for your answer.
3. What does Paul press on to do in Philippians 3:12? What does Paul mean when he says, as the ESV puts it, "I press on to make it my own because Christ has made me His own?" See also 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Titus 2:11-14.
4. What is one way Paul intends to apply that will help him press on to his goal? See Philippians 3:13.
5. What surprising bit of information does Paul convey at the beginning of Philippians 3:13?



6. Paul reiterates the motivating goal of his life in Philippians 3:14. What is it? See also 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 4:7-8.
  
7. With Paul's previous words fresh in our minds, we're now ready to tackle our passage for this lesson. What command are we given in verse 15?
  
8. What are we to imitate? To what is Paul referring in his command from verse 15? For sure, your answer should include verse 14, though you may consider Paul's command reaches to include verses 12-14.
  
9. Paul uses different forms of the *same* Greek word in Philippians 3:12 and 3:15. The NASB translated the word as *perfect* for both verses, while the ESV, NKJV, and NIV chose to translate the word in Philippians 3:12 as *perfect* and in Philippians 3:15 as *mature*. The reason for this translation difference can be found in the context of the passage. To whom is the command addressed in Philippians 3:15?
  
10. What distinction in thought is exposed in verse 15?
  
11. Why is it completely reasonable to expect believers, especially mature and maturing believers, to have Paul's same attitude? See John 15:8, 16; Romans 7:4; Ephesians 4:14-16; Titus 3:14.

12. What should the mature and maturing believers continue to do according to verse 16?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. What seems absolutely clear from Paul's comments is that there's no going backward or regressing for those whose goal is the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. What words or phrases does Paul use in this section that underscore that attitude? See verses 12-16. What else do we glean from the following verses? See 1 Corinthians 15:58; Philippians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1, 10; 2 Peter 1:5-10; 3:18.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. What is Paul instructing believers to do in verse 16? As you consider your answer, review Paul's comments in verse 12, which will help you put your thoughts together. For some examples, you can refer to Philippians 1:27; 1 Timothy 4:12; James 1:2-4.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
15. Not only does Paul desire all believers to have an attitude of pressing on toward the goal while maintaining and progressing in their walk with the Lord, what else does he urge us to do in verse 17?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
16. What do you learn in verse 17 about *your* role in the body of Christ?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
17. Paul contrasts the way true believers walk with another group. Who are they and how do they walk? See verses 18-19.

18. Define *appetite* [Strong's #2836 (ESV, NKJV *belly*; NIV *stomach*)]. See also Matthew 6:31-33; Romans 16:17-18; 1 Peter 4:3.
  
19. For a fun exercise, take the description about the unbelievers from verses 18-19 and instead tailor those verses to describe believers. For example, "For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even *rejoicing* that they are *friends* of Christ..."
  
20. What do we learn about believers from verse 20?
  
21. Define *citizenship* [Strong's #4175]. See also Ephesians 2:19; Hebrews 12:22-23; Revelation 21:10-27.
  
22. What do you learn about being a *citizen* from verse 20?

"Paul reminds them of one great truth: 'Our citizenship', he says, 'is in heaven.' Here was a picture the Philippians could understand. Philippi was a Roman colony. Here and there at strategic military centres, the Romans established their colonies. In such places, the citizens were mostly soldiers who had served their time—twenty-one years—and who had been rewarded with full citizenship. The great characteristic of these colonies was that, wherever they were, they remained fragments of Rome. Roman-style clothes were worn; Roman magistrates governed; Latin was spoken; Roman justice was administered; Roman morals were observed. Even in the most remote regions, they remained unshakably Roman. Paul says to the Philippians: 'Just as the Roman colonists never forget that they belong to Rome, you must never forget that you are citizens of heaven; and your conduct must match your citizenship.'" ~William Barclay<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Barclay, *The Letters to Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*, 3rd ed. fully rev. and updated, The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 81.

23. Another reason why we wait for and eagerly anticipate the Lord's return is given in verse 21, which is a fulfillment of Philippians 3:11. What will happen according to verse 21? See also 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 48-54; 2 Corinthians 5:2-4, 8; Philippians 1:21.
24. From this passage, we see that there is one thing that all believers have in common. What is it? See 1 Corinthians 1:7-8; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 2 Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:2.
25. Remember, Paul was writing from prison to a church that was experiencing intense pressure, conflict, and trouble from all sides. Review the soul-refreshing truths from Philippians 3:12-21 and list the truths you find encouraging to think about in your own times of trouble.

“Paul mentions particularly that the believer will receive a glorified body, like the body of Christ. Today we live in a “body of humiliation” (which is the meaning of the word translated “vile” in Phil. 3:21); but when we see Christ, we will receive a body of glory. It will happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye! (1 Cor. 15:42–53) At that moment, all the things of this world will be worthless to us—just as they ought to be, relatively, today! If we are living in the future tense, then we will be exercising the spiritual mind and living for the things that really matter.” ~Warren Wiersbe<sup>2</sup>

“Here is a precious truth for thee, believer. Thou mayest be poor, or in suffering, or unknown, but for thine encouragement take a review of thy “calling” and the consequences that flow from it, and especially that blessed result here spoken of. As surely as thou art God's child today, so surely shall all thy trials soon be at an end, and thou shalt be rich to all the intents of bliss. Wait awhile, and that weary head shall wear the crown of glory, and that hand of labour shall grasp the palm-branch of victory. Lament not thy troubles, but rather rejoice that ere long thou wilt be where “there shall be neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.”<sup>3</sup> ~Charles Spurgeon

<sup>2</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 93–94.

<sup>3</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, Complete and unabridged*; New modern edition. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006). May 28<sup>th</sup>, Morning.

## Philippians

### Lesson #14, Chapter 4 Observation

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. Observation is a necessary part of Bible study that all too often can be overlooked or rushed through. Simply put, observation is the practice of noticing what is in the text. At this stage in the Bible study, you're noticing and then recording what God has put into the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what it means or how it applies to your life—that will come later, I promise. Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. You'll be glad you did!

I've included Chapter 4 at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

1. SUMMARIZE. To begin, read through Chapter 4. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 4. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (3:17-4:1).<sup>2</sup>
  - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 2-3).
  - c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 4-7).

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<sup>1</sup> The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

<sup>2</sup> Most commentary writers connect Philippians 4:1 with Paul's comments at the end of Chapter 3. Though verse 1 does also provide a transitional bridge into the contents of Chapter 4.

- d. Summarize paragraph 4 (verses 8-9).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - e. Summarize paragraph 5 (verses 10-14).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - f. Summarize paragraph 6 (verses 15-20).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - g. Summarize paragraph 7 (verses 21-23).
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2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your three to five word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  4. MARK. On the *Philippians Bible Text* handout mark key words. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. Start with these first. Then mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

5. LIST. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in Philippians Chapter 1. Your Chapter 1 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below. Verse 2: grace to you and peace from *God*; verse 2: *God* our *Father*; verse 3: I thank *God* when I [Paul] remember you [Philippians].

6. MARK. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be.
7. LIST. Now, list the commands on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
8. MARK. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as*, *likewise*, *in the same manner*, or *like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted.
9. LIST. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using.
10. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore*, *wherefore*, *finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)
11. MARK. Mark any time *so that* is used.

12. LIST. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!
  
13. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
  
14. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy are bond-servants* from 1:1.
  
15. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person. For example, you might read John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*” From this verse we see that God is loving [because He loved the world]; He is giving [because He gave His Son]; He is eternal [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].
  
16. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action. For example, in Philippians 1:1 *we find a list about Paul’s thankful heart*. We discover 1) he’s thankful when he remembers the Philippians; 2) he’s shows his thankfulness by praying for them; 3) his thankfulness spills over into prayers with joy for them; 4) he’s thankful when he remembers how they participated in the gospel from the very beginning until now.
  
17. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed which you thought were interesting.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in each chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life at this time. Your task at this time is to look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter. Have fun digging into God's word!



## Philippians

### Lesson #15, Chapter 4:1-7

As you prepare to study this passage, be sure to take time to seek the Lord's wisdom and help in learning from His Word.

1. Because Philippians 4:1 begins with *therefore*, we know we shouldn't consider its contents without taking into consideration what precedes it. To do that, let's take a moment and summarize in a word, phrase or sentence Paul's main point or focus for Philippians 3:1-7; 3:8-16; and 3:17-21.
2. What do you learn about those Paul is addressing from Philippians 4:1?
3. What command is given in Philippians 4:1?
4. Whatever else may follow, we know that Philippians 4:1 is clearly linked to Paul's closing comments in Chapter 3. Why would Philippians 3:17-21 be important to keep in mind as exhorts his beloved ones in Philippians 4:1?
5. What does it mean to *stand firm* [Strong's #4739 (NKJV *stand fast*)]? What else can you glean about what it means to *stand firm* and what it looks like in our lives? See 1 Corinthians 16:13; Galatians 5:1; Philippians 1:27; 1 Thessalonians 3:7-10; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15.

6. Philippians 4:2 reveals one of the ways the Philippian believers needed to live out the steadfast firmness of their faith. What is the situation?
  
7. Who is being called upon in verse 3? What are they to do?
  
8. What past history do these women share according to verse 3? Why is this situation especially poignant in light of the preceding context from Philippians 3:17-21 and even the tone of the whole book?
  
9. How would the scenario in Philippians 4:2-3 require steadfastness of faith on the part of the church leaders and church body?
  
10. *Based on what we've been studying and considering so far in our lesson*, how would you counsel two friends who have fallen into discord and out of harmony?
  
11. After reminding the Philippians to stand firm and help weak and sinning believers to repent, what does Paul exhort the believers to do next in Philippians 4:4? What observations can you make about verse 4?
  
12. *Why* should believers rejoice? See Romans 5:1-5; 12:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Titus 2:11-13 to get you started. Also consider what it says about us if we don't rejoice.

13. We often forget that Philippians 4:4 is a command. What are some resources God has given to help us obey this command more faithfully? What should we do if we haven't been obeying this command?
  
14. Not only are we to rejoice in the Lord, what else are we to do according to verse 5?
  
15. Define *gentle* [Strong's #1933 (NKJV *reasonableness*)]. The same Greek word is used in 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 3:2; James 3:17; 1 Peter 2:18. What else do you learn about the word, its meaning, and its bearing on our lives from those references?
  
16. Where do we get this kind of character quality? See Matthew 11:29; 21:5; 2 Corinthians 10:1; Galatians 5:22-23. Since we are new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), have been given a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26-27), and have God's help and resources available to us (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Peter 1:2-4), is there ever a time when we *just can't* be patient, reasonable, or easy to get along with?
  
17. The word *known* in verse 5 refers to knowledge gained through experience, which has direct bearing in how we interact with others. What are some ways others would/could *experience* or come to know that we are reasonable and easy to get along with?

Let your sweet reasonableness, your forbearance, your being satisfied with less than your due, become known to all men. The Lord is near.<sup>1</sup> ~Kenneth Wuest's translation

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 109.

18. Paul reminds his dear friends that *the Lord is near*, which is referring to the Lord's soon return. How can that truth be an encouragement and a motivation in living out the commands of this passage?

"He is happy who feels a jealous fear of doing wrong. Holy fear looks not only before it leaps, but even before it moves. It is afraid of error, afraid of neglecting duty, afraid of committing sin. It fears ill company, loose talk, and questionable policy."<sup>2</sup> ~Charles Spurgeon

19. We are to rejoice in the Lord, be sweetly reasonable because of the Lord's soon return, and now in the first part of verse 6, what are we to do?

20. What prescription does Paul give for the believer's anxiety? See verse 6 after the command.

21. How would applying this simple balm calm our worried and anxious hearts?

The Greek construction indicates that we have here a prohibition which forbids the continuance of an action already habitually going on. The Philippian saints were habitually worrying. Paul exhorts them to stop it. The word *nothing* is literally "not even one thing."<sup>3</sup> ~Kenneth Wuest

22. What comes as a result of applying verse 6 in our lives? See Philippians 4:7.

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<sup>2</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, *The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith: Being Precious Promises Arranged for Daily Use with Brief Comments* (New York: American Tract Society, 1893), 253.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader, vol. 5* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 109.

“You can't see the peace of God, but like secret ink, when held to the fire, it reveals itself! e.g., Affliction frequently opens truths to us and opens us to the truth. Experience unlocks truths that were closed. Many passages of Scripture will never be made clear by the commentator, for these must be expounded by experience. Many a verse is written in a secret ink that must be held to the fire of adversity to make it visible. Affliction plows and opens our hearts, so that into our innermost nature the truth penetrates and soaks like rain into the plowed land.”<sup>4</sup> ~Charles Spurgeon

23. What do you learn about the peace described in verse 7? List at least 5 observations that you notice from Philippians 4:7.
24. Though it's not immediately apparent, the details in our passage are tied to the thought that our Lord Jesus will soon return. Finish this thought with *at least 5 items* from Philippians 4:1-7: *Because our Lord's return is near, we should take care to ...*

“Anxious care often leads to acts of sin. He who cannot calmly leave his affairs in God's hand, but will carry his own burden, is very likely to be tempted to use wrong means to help himself. This sin leads to a forsaking of God as our counsellor, and resorting instead to human wisdom. This is going to the “broken cistern” instead of to the “fountain;” a sin which was laid against Israel of old. Anxiety makes us doubt God's lovingkindness, and thus our love to Him grows cold; we feel mistrust, and thus grieve the Spirit of God, so that our prayers become hindered, our consistent example marred, and our life one of self-seeking. Thus want of confidence in God leads us to wander far from Him; but if through simple faith in His promise, we cast each burden as it comes upon Him, and are “careful for nothing” because He undertakes to care for us, it will keep us close to Him, and strengthen us against much temptation. ‘Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.’”<sup>5</sup> ~Charles Spurgeon

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<sup>4</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, *Beside Still Waters*, pg. 54.

<sup>5</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings* (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1896).

## Philippians

### Lesson #16, Chapter 4:8-14

Ask the Lord for His continued grace and help as you come to His Word. Seek to worship the Lord with a humble and teachable heart.

1. Review the commands given to believers from Philippians 4:1-7.
2. How does Paul begin Philippians 4:8? What does that tell you about what is to come in the verse?
3. What command is given in Philippians 4:8? How would you describe or categorize the list that accompanies his command in verse 8?
4. Define *dwell* [Strong's #3049 (ESV, NIV *think*; NKJV *meditate*)].
5. Dwell, as it is used in our text, is in the present middle imperative, which means *we initiate and participate in the action*. It means we are to be doing something to ourselves. Here we are to begin dwelling and then continue in the action of dwelling on and thinking carefully about certain things. What does this teach you about what God wants us to do when it comes to how and what we are thinking on?
6. How does the context of the preceding verses, specifically verses 6-7, show us when and why we should apply the command of Philippians 4:8?

7. How would dwelling on the things that are *true* fix most of our sinful struggles? Make a list of 5 or more things that you know are *true* from the Word of God that have helped you when you needed to think on true things.
  
8. The word *honorable* [Strong's #4586 (NKJV, NIV *noble*)] is rich with meaning. Look up the word to see what you can discover, and why it would be so good to think on honorable things.
  
9. Why would it be good to think on *right* (ESV, NKJV *just*) things? Also see Acts 4:19; Ephesians 6:1; 2 Peter 1:13 where the same Greek word is used to help you form your answer.
  
10. As Paul's list continues in verse 8 there's a sense in which it almost begins to pick up speed like a snowball gaining momentum as it rolls down a hill. Choose one or two more of the descriptions in the verse to discover their meaning.
  
11. And if the command to dwell on such praiseworthy things wasn't enough, what command is given in verse 9?
  
12. What is the result of such obedience according to the end of verse 9? Notice the connection with Philippians 4:7. If we put these commands from verses 4-9 into practice in our lives, what will be the result?

“The key to godly living is godly thinking, as Solomon wisely observed: “Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life” (Prov. 4:23).”<sup>1</sup> ~John MacArthur

13. What new subject does Paul introduce in Philippians 4:10? In what way did the Philippians show their concern for Paul? See Philippians 4:15-16.
  
14. In verse 10, Paul says he *rejoiced* in the Philippians’ gift. Why is that? See Philippians 4:17.
  
15. Though Paul was happy about their gift of love and faith toward him, what does he hasten to assure them in Philippians 4:11?
  
16. We want to take note of Paul’s statement in Philippians 4:11, as learning to be content in any circumstances implies many biblical and life lessons taken to heart and then applied. Before we study *how* Paul learned this important lesson, take some time to come up with at least 5 observations about Philippians 4:11 as you consider what you learn about Paul and what he knew about his God.
  
17. Why is contentment *essential* for every believer? What does a contented spirit communicate about us and how we view our lives? See 1 Samuel 3:18; Job 2:10; Psalm 73:25-28; 2 Corinthians 9:8; 1 Timothy 6:6-9; Hebrews 13:5-6.
  
18. Paul details some of the aspects of his soul’s training in Philippians 4:12. What do you learn? Explain how the wide range of Paul’s experiences trained him in contentment.

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<sup>1</sup>John F. MacArthur Jr., [\*Philippians\*](#), MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 2001), 290.



19. According to Philippians 4:13, from where does true contentment come?

Verse 13 can literally be translated, "I can do all things through Him who infuses strength into me." One commentator, Lenski, says, "Being connected with the Lord who keeps empowering him, Paul always has the strength for everything in his life and his work."

20. God strengthens you for whatever He brings in your life. Consider some of your life situations, temptations, and struggles as you look up the following Scriptures that show how God strengthens you. What do you learn from the verses that follow? See Isaiah 40:29-31; 41:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; Ephesians 3:16-19; Philippians 4:13; Colossians 1:11.

21. How does Paul close his explanation to the Philippians in verse 14? Why does he add this comment after his statements on contentment?

22. We have covered a lot of ground in this lesson! What is one part of your study that stood out to you that you want to remember and apply?

"A contented Christian does not choose his cross, but is willing to take that which God chooses, and is content with the kind and the duration of the cross. He will wait for God's providence to remove it, but never force the door to escape from it."<sup>2</sup> ~Thomas Watson

"A contented Christian is like Noah in the ark: although tossed upon the waters, he reposed confidently in his God. The soul that is safe in the ark of contentment, sits quiet and sails above all the waves of trouble, and can even sing amid the deluge. The wheels of a chariot are an emblem of contentment: the wheels move, the axle stirs not. When change and motion are around us, a contented spirit remains firm in its centre."<sup>3</sup> ~Thomas Watson

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<sup>2</sup>Thomas Watson, *Puritan Gems; Or, Wise and Holy Sayings of the Rev. Thomas Watson, A.M.*, ed. John Adey, Second Thousand. (London: J. Snow, and Ward and Co.; Nisbet and Co.; E. F. Gooch, 1850), 25–30.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## Philippians

### Lesson #17, Chapter 4:15-23

Rich, life-changing truths await us in the final verses of the book of Philippians. Be sure to ask the Lord for His grace and help as you complete your final lesson in this God-exalting book.

1. Philippians 4:10-14 flows right into our passage for this lesson. By way of review, look at verse 10 to see why Paul rejoiced. What was the reason?
2. Paul was quick to reassure the Philippians of an important truth he had learned. What was it? See verses 11-13.
3. What commendation did the Philippians' receive from Paul? See verse 14.
4. What do we learn about the Philippian believers according to Philippians 4:15-16?
5. The gracious gift Paul received from the Philippians had far-reaching effects for the Thessalonian and Corinthian believers too. What did the Philippians' gift allow Paul to do according to 2 Corinthians 11:8-12; 12:11-18; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8?
6. What truths and attitudes seemed to have undergirded the Philippians' giving? See Matthew 6:19-21; Hebrews 10:32-34; 13:5-6; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

7. What is Paul quick to assure the Philippians in verse 17?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. One of the paradoxes of kingdom living is highlighted when Paul talks about how the Philippians' giving "increases the profit to their account." How would their giving result in some profit to themselves? See Proverbs 19:17; Matthew 10:40-42; Luke 14:12-14; Hebrews 6:10.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What else does Paul assure the believers of in Philippians 4:18?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Describe the Philippians' giving from verse 18?
  - a. What connection does Paul want them to see and understand when it comes to giving? See Exodus 29:18; Romans 12:1; Philippians 4:18; Hebrews 13:16; 1 Peter 2:5.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. How should these truths about worshipful giving and service guide you?

"We Give Thee But Thine Own"  
by William W. How, 1823-1897

We give Thee but Thine own,  
Whate'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is Thine alone,  
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

11. How does Paul continue to encourage the Philippians in verse 19? List *at least 4* observations you can make about Philippians 4:19.
  
12. Define *supply* [Strong's #4137 (NIV *meet*)].
  
13. How does reading verse 19 in its context of Philippians 4:15-20 help protect us from treating God like a cosmic vending machine? Based on what Paul has been saying in this passage, what attitudes and thoughts should guide our understanding about verse 19?

"Paul does not see this gift as simply coming from Philippi. He sees it as the supply of his need from heaven." ~Warren Wiersbe<sup>1</sup>

14. There are so many truths packed into that little sentence in Philippians 4:19! Paul deals with the same truths in a more in-depth way in 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. Read through the 2 Corinthians passage and note what you learn about God and the principles for giving in the passage.

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<sup>1</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 99.



21. John MacArthur provides some insight into why Paul desires *grace* for the believers. He writes, “Believers are not only saved by grace, but also sustained by grace. They are governed by grace, guided by grace, kept by grace, strengthened by grace, sanctified by grace, and enabled by grace. They are constantly dependent on the forgiveness, comfort, peace, joy, boldness, and instruction that come through God’s grace.”<sup>3</sup> How does Paul’s blessing grow in scope as you consider all that is meant in the simple words, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit”?
  
22. Take some time to review the letter to the Philippians. What things have stood out to you as you have studied this book? What admonitions or lessons do you want to continue to think on and apply after you complete your study of Philippians?

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Philippians 4:23

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<sup>3</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Philippians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 2001), 318.