



THE Vision

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PHILIPPIANS: THE LETTER OF JOY

A. AUTHOR: Paul

B. BACKGROUND: Paul, writing from prison, directed his letter to the Christians in Philippi to express thanks for a gift they had given him.

C. THEME: God intends the Christian life to be a joyful experience, made more so by the unity of believers in the church.

D. OUTLINE:

1. Introduction (1:1-11)

- a. The Greeting (1:1-2)
 - Called himself a *bondservant*
 - Listed church servants as *bishops* and *deacons*
- b. Two Prayers for the Philippians (1:3-11)
 - Prayer of Thanks (1:3-8)
 - Prayer of Intercession (1:9-11)

2. The Significance of Paul's Circumstances (1:12-26)

- a. The Gospel Progresses through Paul's Imprisonment (1:12-18)
- b. Christ Is Exalted through Paul's Life or Death (1:19-26)

3. The Challenge of the Philippians' Circumstances (1:27-4:9)

- a. Standing United (1:27-2:18)
 - Against Opposition from the Outside (1:27-30)
 - Against Division from Within (2:1-4)
 - By Following Christ's Example (2:5-11)
 - By Working Out One's Own Salvation (2:12-18)

b. Two Examples of Christian Unity (2:19-30)

- Timothy (2:19-24)
- Epaphroditus (2:25-30)

c. A Warning against Theological Error (3:1-4:1)

- A Warning against Judaizers (3:1-11)
- A Warning against Perfectionists (3:12-4:1)

4. Final Admonitions (4:2-9)

- A Plea for Unity between Two Influential Women (4:2-3)
- Rejoice in the Lord (4:4)
- Let Your Gentleness Be Evident (4:5)
- Don't Worry...Pray! (4:6-7)
- Think on Godly Things (4:8-9)

5. Conclusion (4:10-23)

- An Expression of Gratitude (4:10-20)
- Closing Benediction and Greetings (4:21-23)

E. REAL LIFE LESSONS FROM PHILLIPIANS

1. Both church leaders and members are servants of Christ.
2. Our circumstances, good or bad, can advance the gospel.
3. Christian unity is crucial for the advancement of the gospel.
4. Unity involves agreement both in actions and belief.
5. Christians should be the most positive and joyful people on earth.

