

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

Introduction To Philippians

Philippians 1:1-2

Introduction

People are searching for joy and peace today, but most find these disappointingly illusive. Instead of turning to God, they end up looking in all the wrong places:

1. Money and lots of it
2. Power and influence
3. Success and achievement
4. Philanthropy and acts of kindness
5. A vegan diet

Others who have all but abandoned the hope of experiencing lasting joy and peace have turned to more destructive activities in hopes of temporary escape. They drink alcohol, smoke dope, swallow pills, sleep around, leer at pornography, eat to the point of gluttony, abandon their families and go on shopping sprees.

Quote: Lewis, C. S. *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*

“Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition, when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.”

But despite all of the world’s efforts to find peace and joy, the things that it is reaching for often do more harm than good. Why?

1. They fail to provide LASTING PEACE in the face of life's often harsh realities
2. They fail to deal with the PROBLEM OF SIN, the true underlying cause of most of our problems including depression and anxiety.
3. They do not provide PEACE WITH GOD, the only true basis for lasting peace of mind

This short book was written by a man who had found true joy and peace of mind:

1. Even though he was imprisoned at the time! - Phil 1:12-18
 2. Even though he was facing capital punishment as a martyr! - Phil 2:17-18
- He had the joy that comes from peace of mind, and wanted to share it with others! - Phil 4:4-7,11-13

I The Author

- A. The human authors: [Verse 1a]
 1. Paul = *Saul* (Hebrew) *Paul* (Latin)
 - a. His pre-conversion life:

1. He was a Roman citizen and **devout** Jew - Acts 22:3-5
2. He was a Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin
3. He was a **persecutor** of the saints - Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-2

b. His post-conversion life: - Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-29

1. He was a **herald** of Jesus Christ and a preacher of the gospel - Eph 3:7-11
2. He was an apostle/missionary/church planter - 1 Tim 2:7
3. He was author or at least **13** NT books

Application: The transforming power of the gospel!

2 Cor 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

2. Timothy = “Dear to God”

- a. He was **raised** by his mother/grandmother - 2 Tim 1:5

Application: The power of a mother’s love, example and training!

b. He was converted on Paul’s 1st journey - 2 Tim 3:10-11

c. He accompanied Paul on his 2nd journey - Ac 16:1-3

He became Paul’s “hanai” son and is described as:

1. Paul’s faithful son in the Lord - 1 Cor 4:17
2. Paul’s “true son in faith” and Paul’s fellow worker - Rom 16:21; 1 Thess 3:2
3. Paul’s protégé and a true undershepherd - Phil 2:19-22

Phil 2:19-22 “I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.”

d. He was appointed to **pastor** the church in **Ephesus** - 1 Tim 1:3; 3:14

Now, I included Timothy under authorship along with Paul, but this isn’t really accurate. Timothy didn’t author this book, Paul did. So why did Paul include him in the opening line of the book?

1. Because Paul was a generous team player - Acts 16
2. Because Paul planned to send Timothy to Philippi and therefore wanted to commend Timothy to the church as his esteemed co-worker and fellow servant of God.
3. Because Timothy was likely Paul’s scribe in the writing of Philippians.

3. **Servants** of Christ Jesus

You can learn a lot about someone from how they introduce themselves.

Paul could have introduced himself as, "Dr. Paul, summa cum laude! MDiv, PhD, D.D., etc" Or, "Paul, the reverend, eminent, holy oracle of God." Instead, he presents himself simply as a ...

Servant = Doulos = "Bondslave"

This was Paul's favorite self-selected title (Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Phil 1:1; Tit 1:1). It was also the preferred designation of James (Jam 1:1), Peter (2 Pt 1:1), Jude (Jd 1:1), and John (Rev 1:1).

In most cultures being a slave is not desirable – certainly nothing to brag about and definitely not something a person would voluntarily choose.

But Paul's view of slavery was deeply influenced by two factors:

1. His understanding of the person, character and nature of the master
2. His understanding of the Hebrew concept of "bondservant"
Any Israelite, who had become a slave could be redeemed (set free for a price) at any time by relatives. But if there was no one to redeem him, then he was to receive his freedom without payment after six years of service. However, if at the end of 6 years, he said, "I like it here. I love my master and his family and I'm well treated." He was brought before the elders of the city and his ear was pierced by his master against the master's doorpost with an awl signifying he was a "doulos", a permanent slave by choice (Ex 21:6; Dt 15:17).

So, a bondservant was one who by choice, gladly and permanently surrendered his life to the service of his master.

Application: Whose slave are you?

Biblically speaking, everyone is a slave -- either to Satan or to God.

Ps 40:6-8 "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced; burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. Then I said, "Here I am, I have come-- it is written about me in the scroll. I desire to do your will, O my God."

B. The divine author: God

1. It is God-breathed - 2 Tim 3:16-17
2. It is Jesus Christ-embodied - John 1:1
3. It is Spirit-inspired - 2 Pet 1:20-21

Application: Our confidence in God's Word!

Ps 12:6 "And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times."

II The Recipients

A. The primary recipients: The Philippian church [Verse 1b]

1. To all the **saints** in Christ

Saints = Hagios = “Holy, consecrated, set apart ones”

Paul most often addresses his letters to “the saints” (Rom 1:7; Eph 1:1, Phil 1:1)

When we think of a "saint" we generally think of a person who is:

1. Extraordinarily pious in their commitment to God (Mother Theresa)
2. Recognized and canonized by the church for an outstanding miracle
3. And last but not least, they're DEAD!

But according to the Bible there are only two types of people in the world -- saints and pagans. Or if you're from the South -- “saints and aints”!

The questions then become, how does one move from an “aint” to a saint?

The answer lies in the simple phrase, “In Christ”!

1. Mankind can be divided into two groups:

- a. Those outside of Christ - the “aints” (Col.4:5; 1 Thess. 4:12)
- b. Those who are "IN CHRIST" - the “saints” (2 Cor 5:17; Rom 8:1)

2. By man's first birth he is "IN ADAM" - an “aint” (1 Cor. 15:22) and he is part of the old creation that was spoiled by the fall. By man's second birth (John 3) he is "IN CHRIST" - a “saint” (1 Cor. 15:22) and part of the new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

So how can a person get to be “a saint IN CHRIST”? How does this happen?

Gal 3:26-27 “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”

1 Cor 6:9-11 “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

Application: Saint or ain't -- it's one or the other!!

If you are a true follower of Christ, you are a saint! Rejoice!! You are a person set-apart for His purpose and to accomplish His will.

2. To all the overseers and deacons

Overseers = Espiskopos = “Bishops or undershepherds”

These were men charged with guarding the flock and providing spiritual food and were required to meet certain qualifications before they were appointed to serve as "elders-bishops-pastors" - 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

Deacons = Diakonos = “Waiters; Servants or ministers”

Like bishops or elders, deacons also had to meet certain qualifications that are described in 1 Ti 3:8-13. They served the needs of the congregation under the oversight of the bishops (elders-pastors).

So in this verse we see the leadership structure of a local church:

- a. It is made up of "saints" (the members)
- b. It is overseen by "bishops" (pastors/teachers)
- c. It is served with the assistance of "deacons" (appointed servants)

B. The secondary recipients: The **catholic** church
The church universal, which includes you and me!!

III The Historical Background

A. The date: Approximately 60-62 A.D.

B. The city of Philippi

1. It was built in 368 B.C. by Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great.
2. It was on the main road from Rome to Asia, the famous Via Ignatia, making it important economically, politically and spiritually.
3. It was a Roman colony populated primarily by retired Roman military officers
2. It was the leading city of Macedonia and the first place Paul preached the gospel in Europe.

C. The church of Philippi

1. The was founded by Paul eleven years earlier on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:11-40) and was the first church established on the continent of Europe.
2. It was prompted by the "Macedonia Call" - Acts 16:9
3. It started with the conversion of Lydia - Acts 16:13-15
4. It continued with the conversion of the Philippian jailor and his family - Acts 16:16-34
5. It was initially led and overseen by Luke following Paul's departure

D. The circumstances:

1. Paul was awaiting **trial** in Rome - Ac 28:30-31

The book of Acts tells us that Paul had been falsely accused and held without trial in Caesarea for two years. When an assassination plot was discovered, Paul exercised his right as a Roman citizen and appealed the case to Caesar. On the way to Rome he survived a storm and shipwreck on the Mediterranean Sea. Eventually, he arrived in Rome where he waited 2 years for his court appearance before Caesar.

2. Paul was under arrest, yet **FREE**

Normally, a Roman prisoner would be chained 24/7 to a Roman soldier. But as we discovered in the closing chapters of Acts, God gave Paul favor with Rome and its leaders. As a result, he was given the freedom to rent his own house, welcome

friends, and preach the Kingdom of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ unhindered for two years. But he was far from free! He was guarded, watched carefully and monitored continuously.

Note: Paul never considered himself a slave of Rome, but ...

- a. A prisoner of Christ Jesus - Eph 3:1
- b. A prisoner for the Lord - Eph 4:1
- c. An ambassador in chains - Eph 6:10

Application: Who you serve makes all the difference!! Whose servant are you?

D. The occasion and purpose:

1. To **thank** the Philippians - 1:3-6; 4:10-19
2. To report his own circumstances - 1:12-2:18
3. To **encourage** them to stand firm - 1:27-28; 3:1-21
4. To commend Timothy and Epaphroditus - 2:19-30
5. To **exhort** them to humility and unity - 4:2-4

E. The overall theme and key verse:

1. Overall theme: **Joy** in suffering - 1:21-24

The word "joy" is found in one form or another 16 times in the 104 verses of this short letter. When Paul writes about joy he is not writing from a corner office with a view or from the shores of a beautiful resort. He writes from a place of imprisonment and future uncertainty!

Note:

1. Happiness is dependent upon circumstances

Definition: "Happiness is the interval between periods of unhappiness."

Quote: "What most people experience is not a permanent state of happiness. It is a mixture of what essayist Hugh Prather once called "unsolved problems, ambiguous victories and vague defeats—with few moments of clear peace."

2. Joy is independent of and transcends circumstances

Definition of joy: John McArthur

"It is a gift from God (Ps 16:11) to those who believe the gospel (Luke 2:10) being produced in the them by the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17; Gal 5:22) as they receive and obey the Scripture (Jer 15:16; 1 Jn 1:4) being mixed with trails (Rom 5:3-5; James 1:2; 1 Pt 1:6) and set their hope and their heart on future glory (Rom 5:2; 12:12; 1 Pt 4:13; Jude 24)."

2. Key verse: Philippians 1:6

Phil 1:6 "... being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

IV The Greeting

A. The conferring of blessings: [Verse 2a]

This blessing is common to Paul's letters (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Col 1:3; Eph 1:2; 2 Thess 1:1; Philemon 1:2-3)

1. **Grace** = "God's favor in spite of demerit" [A Greek greeting]
We all deserve to be burning in hell, but if we ask, God will give us what we don't deserve -- the forgiveness of sins and adoption into His eternal family!

Eph 2:8-9 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast."

2. **Peace** = Shalom = [A Jewish greeting]

- a. "Man's release from enmity with God"
- b. "An inner quietness, tranquility, and rest."

Note: It is not the absence of problems, but:

1. The confidence that you are reconciled with God
Rom 5:1 "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ..."
2. The confidence that God is with you in the midst of them.
Isa 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
3. The confidence that God is working for your good
Rom 8:28 "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Summary: You can never know God's peace until you know God's grace.

Peace is always the product of knowing and appropriating the grace of God in Christ. This order can never be changed. The more we experience the grace of God, the more capacity we have to experience the multifaceted aspects of God's peace.

B. The source of blessings: [Verse 2b]

1. God the Father - The initiator
2. The Lord Jesus Christ - The Savior

Conclusion

Have you experienced the grace and peace that comes only from "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"?

Do you have joy in your life?

Are you confident that:

1. You are reconciled with God - Rom 5:1
2. God is with you in the midst of your challenges - Isa 41:10
3. God is working for your good - Rom 8:28

If you want a new beginning in Christ, it's as simple as "ABC"!

1. **Admit** and repent of your sin
Acts 3:19 "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord ..."
2. **Believe** in Jesus Christ
John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."
3. **Confess** Jesus as your Lord
Rom 10:9 "That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."
Luke 12:8-9 "I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God."

A suggested prayer for a new beginning with God:

"Dear Lord Jesus, I admit I am a sinner. And today I repent of my sin. Please forgive all my sins and give me the gift of eternal life. I believe that your Son, Jesus Christ, died on the cross for my sins, was buried and on the third day rose from the dead. Please come into my life and be my Savior and Lord. I yield to you my allegiance and the balance of my life. Thank you for hearing my prayer and thank you for giving me new life!"

What's next?

1. Pick up a New Believer's Packet.
2. Tell others about your new faith in Christ.
3. Be baptized in obedience to the command of Christ.
4. Communicate with God through Bible reading and prayer.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16D-8WuvQWK9rXN2xPnhxGvJOLvuBYj93/view>
5. Find a Bible-teaching church where you can worship, fellowship, serve and grow in your relationship with God.

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