

The Church in Philippi

Philippians 1:1-18a

Unit 7: Good News Spreads “Chain Breaker”

Wed. 4/29 & Sun.

5/3

“So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.”
John 8:36

The Point: Jesus Breaks Chains

STORY SUMMARY: The Church in Philippi

When Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians, much of his ministry was taking place almost among Gentiles as there was not a large Jewish population in the area. Yet Paul begins his letter to the church in Philippi by calling these non-Jews “saints.” The original Greek word literally means “holy ones.” Paul is thankful for the work of the people in Philippi in spreading the story of Jesus. Paul is certain that this sharing of the gospel will also be fruitful for the church, and the Christians there will continue to learn and grow. As they continue to share and preach and teach, their own love overflows, leading them into even greater knowledge and joy. Although Paul writes this letter while imprisoned, the tone is full of joy and love as he praises the church in Philippi. Paul uses this as another opportunity to spread the gospel rather than a time to be silent.

THE POINT: The proclamation of the gospel of Christ brings joy and thanksgiving even in difficult circumstances.

We all struggle through difficult times in our lives, and the people of the Bible were no different. As Paul writes his letter to the Philippians, he is in prison. Because Christianity was not yet a legal religion in the Roman Empire, the Philippian Christians were meeting in secret in small house churches. The lives of these early disciples were difficult, but Paul praises and encourages them for keeping the joy of the gospel of Christ with them always.

BIBLE NUTS & BOLTS: Letters

This passage contains the opening of the letter to the Philippians. Letters in ancient times followed a formula, beginning with the sender, the addressee, and a greeting. The opening of the letter functions as a snapshot of the whole letter, helping the audience to get a feel for what Paul will say. This letter is written specifically for this community and its situation. It is meant to be read aloud, putting it in a similar category as a sermon or speech. Letters written by Paul or in Paul’s name make up a big portion of the New Testament, along with the four Gospels, the Book of Acts, letters written by other church leaders, and the Book of Revelation.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: Prayer

Paul says that he is “constantly praying in joy” for the Philippians. It is easy to remember to pray while at church, or before a meal or at bedtime. What does it mean to pray constantly? How can we make our life itself a prayer?

Spirit & Truth

Hope Youth Volunteer,

There is not enough words to say to express our thanks for all you did for the youth of Hope. Thank you for giving your time, your talents and your love to these amazing youth. What a great year!!! Thank you for helping Gods word go forth. We could not do it without you. Can't wait to see you in the fall!

Blessings
The Youth Team.