

PHILIPPIANS – LESSON 1 – A LOVE LETTER

DAY 1

Begin this week by reciting Philippians 1:3-4

Memory Verse:

Philippians 1:3-4

³I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. ⁴Always in every prayer of mine for you all making requests with joy.

Reflect: There is power in our memories. Think back over your time being a part of God’s family. Reflect on good memories, kind people, meaningful sermons, and life impacting moments. Thank God for the people in the family of God who have been a blessing in your life. If you want to go a step further, send one or more of these people an email or text expressing a memory of them that is meaningful to you.

DAY 2

Read: Philippians 1 and take time to focus on Philippians 1:1-2.

Reflect: What comes to your mind when you look at yourself in the mirror first thing in the morning? Try this “I am a saint. I am a holy one of God.” This is not what most of us think when we start our day or put our head in our pillow at night but it’s true! Paul refers to the people of God at Philippi as “God’s holy people.” Through Jesus Christ, we are cleansed and made holy. Amazing! Be reminded that the holy God of Heaven looks at you and sees one of his saints. Believe it and grow into that reality.

Journal:

- Why do I have a hard time seeing myself as one of God’s “holy people”?
- How can I grow in seeing myself as a saint of God (that is how can I adjust my words, attitudes, and actions to reflect my spiritual reality)?

Pray: Praise God for his holiness and ask for the power of His spirit to help you embrace who you are in Jesus as you seek to become more like Him.

DAY 3

Read: Philippians 2 and Philippians 1:1-2

Reflect: Grace and peace. What beautiful and powerful words! Paul not only used these words to begin his letter, but he sought to bring peace wherever he went and extend grace

to each person he met. What are some ways you can bring peace to people you encounter in your neighborhood, workplace, church, and everywhere you go?

Journal:

- What are the places and situations you will enter this week that really need peace? How can you be sure to bring peace and not more tension and turmoil?
- In our graceless world, people hunger for signs of kindness, goodness, and grace. Consider someone you may come in contact with this week who needs a touch of grace. How can you bring the grace of Jesus into this situation?

Pray: Ask God to bring reminders to you throughout this week of how you can show his peace and grace wherever you go.

DAY 4

Read: Philippians 3 and Philippians 1:6

Reflect: There are 2 truths that Paul unveils in Philippians 1:6. First, God is at work in you. He is close and active. He has a plan for your life. Second, God is not done growing you. He will bring His work to completion, but you are still on the journey. Receive these truths with joy and confidence: God is near and He is working in me. God will accomplish His purposes and plans in me. What is God doing in you today and how can you partner in His wise and good plan?

Journal:

- What are ways that God has been working in you, growing you, and making you more like Jesus?
- How can you partner with God to keep taking steps forward in these areas of growth?

Pray: Ask for courage and power to keep taking steps forward in God's will for your life. Ask Him to show you if there is a place of needed growth where you are stalled and need to begin pressing forward today.

DAY 5

Read: Philippians 4 and Philippians 1:7

Reflect: Love is never chained. Though Paul was in chains, he still felt deep affection for his friends in Philippi and communicated his love for them in his letter. He was incarcerated because he confidently followed Jesus and boldly proclaimed the gospel. Even from jail, Paul wrote letters inspired by the Holy Ghost that lavished people with God's love from heaven. When we feel confined, trapped, and bound up, we can still receive, enjoy, and

share the love of God. What can you learn from Paul's example of being chained but still free to share the love of Jesus?

Journal:

- What situations and circumstances in life tend to bind you up and keep you from expressing love and care for others?
- How can you continue speaking and showing love no matter what circumstances come your way?

Pray: Ask God to help you speak words of love and take actions that reveal the love of Jesus, no matter how hard your life becomes.

DAY 6

Read: Philippians 1:8

Reflect: The affection of Jesus. What an amazing idea! Paul's longing for the Christians in Philippi was straight from the heart of the savior. How do we live for Jesus when our body is tired, our schedule is jam-packed, and we are feeling weary? In those moments, we live and love in the power of Jesus. Have you ever asked Jesus to grow your love and longing for other people? Have you dared to say, "Jesus, make your longing my longing—make my heart and love like yours"? These are powerful prayers. Dare to lift them up today.

Journal:

- Where has your love grown cold and your heart become calloused?
- How can you walk closer to Jesus so that your heart will become more and more like His?

Pray: Dare to pray the heart, love, and longing of Jesus would flood your life so that you will look and live more like the Savior.

DAY 7

Memorize: Conclude this week's personal study by again reciting Philippians 1:3-4:

³I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. ⁴Always in every prayer of mine for you all making requests with joy.

Reflect: There is power in joyful prayers. These can be prayers of praise to God, supplications for the needs of others, or thanksgiving for the goodness of God. As you lift your heart in prayer, be sure you are not getting into such a routine that you say the words, but your passion is lacking. Pray for joy to fill you to overflowing and for your prayers to be filled with passionate celebration. What is the joy level of your prayers and how can you increase it for the glory of Jesus?